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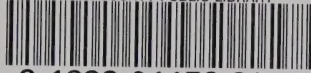
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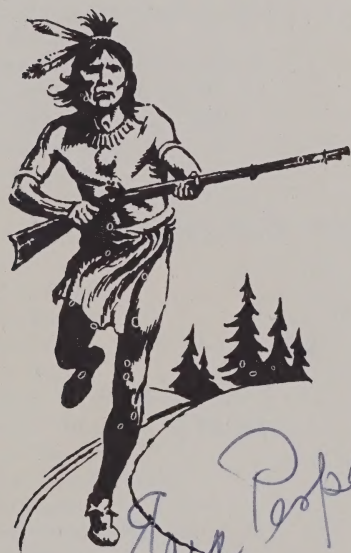
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PATHWAY^c to a VILLAGE

A History of Bronxville

by Victor Mays

Illustrated with drawings by the author and photographs.



Nebko Press, Publishers, Bronxville, New York

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

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Picture Credit: Many of the photographic prints used in this book were prepared from old private photographs by Robert Browning Baker.

FOREWORD

For some twenty years, Bronxville was my hometown. To a degree, it still is. The village of one's boyhood always remains a part of the man — a half-mystical place made up of sweet-smelling summer mornings made sweeter still by the knowledge that school was out and the new sneakers on your feet were soaking up last night's dew . . . a place where winter temperatures were arctic and snow was much deeper than nowadays and the skating flag flew forever. It was a village of great gray rocks suitable for hiding a pioneer scout with a new cap pistol, or a pirate, or an Indian, or a detective — depending on which day of the week it was . . . a village of fields and the river rather than houses and buildings — except your own building, and the school with its eternal chalk-wax-sweat school smell, and the building where The Movies were, and the icecream shop. Later, the house where She lived came into focus, and the pleasant, shattering jar of frozen, cleat-torn earth as you hit flat out — pleasant because you remember the times you stopped their fullback on half-fearsome, half-exultant Autumn Saturdays, and forget tackles missed. It is a place that smells of carbon toast on a stick, cooked in your gang's hut, and apple cider from Armonk, and salt and ships when the wind was in the east. It is the sound of strident school bells — awesome church bells on D-Day, 1944 — the groan of the fire alarm, and the rattle of a spool-ratchet on a Hallowe'en window.

In this book I have tried to catch some of the feeling and flavor of time past, in and around our village. It is not a complete story. Many subjects have been treated briefly or passed over in the interest of producing what I hope is a readable, usable history for the Junior High School. It is not brought up completely to a contemporary cut-off date, because I believe the earlier years are of primary interest, and I desire that the book may age well and not become immediately dated.

As soon as I began research, I found I had to go back in time far beyond the origin of Bronxville as a village, in order to set the stage for its arrival. Many feet crossed our

square mile before it was properly settled, and I have followed some of the paths they made. Occasionally, other parts of Westchester are dealt with historically, where the events bear on Bronxville's, or our nation's, future. So many exciting events have occurred near us that I hope I may be excused for meandering here and there to weave them into the pattern of our village story.

While I have followed historical fact throughout, I have used deductive guesses and license where documentary gaps leave us in the shadows. Thus there may never have been a young Indian called Little Wolf who ran overland to the Hudson, but the up-river probe by the *Half Moon* was watched by many local tribes from the Yonkers shore. Tom Drake may never have lived, but there were settlers in these parts with that surname who lived much as he did. The existing details of the Hutchinson massacre are conflicting, but I have described the incident as I believe it most probably occurred. Later I have included events in the lives of Bronxville settlers. The dialogue is invented but the incidents are recorded or recounted by the persons involved, or surviving families.

I have been aided greatly in preparing this work by the photographic collection of the late Naoma Wetzel, beloved teacher, student of Bronxville history, and inspiration for this project. I am deeply indebted to the Bronxville Seventh Grade faculty, and to the boys and girls who prepared papers of their own which gave me leads for research and ideas about what things interested them. Residents and former residents of Bronxville, the Naoma Wetzel Memorial Committee, Col. Louis H. Frohman, Arthur Ferris, Dudley B. Lawrence, Sr., Mrs. R. Sherrard Elliot, Mrs. Margaret Chambers Warnshuis, Mrs. Elizabeth Martin, the late Mrs. Scheurmann, the late Miss Amie S. Dusenberry, The Westchester County Historical Society, the "Nondescript" monographs, private papers, the staff of the Bronxville Public Library — all these and others have assisted me and I offer sincere thanks.

V.M.
Clinton, Conn.
January, 1961



The measure of Man is his greatness of spirit — his devotion to others, his simplicity of faith, his sincerity of purpose. Miss Naoma Wetzel shared her great abundance of these qualities with her students through the years.

We can but humbly acknowledge these golden years of devotion and understanding which reflect from the lives of all who knew her.

In loving memory of Naoma Wetzel we dedicate this book.

Her Schoolchildren

..... compiled from
dedications written by
her last class

PROLOGUE

I recall how, as a boy, I used to race indoors from play and sit glued to the radio during the magic hour before supper. Before the arrival of TV, the radio presented a series of adventure shows for children — "Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy," "Terry and the Pirates," "Renfrew of the Mounted," "Bobby Benson and the H Bar O Riders" — all calculated to raise the hackles on your neck and make you buy various breakfast cereals. But the best of the lot was one called "Buck Rogers in the Twenty-Fifth Century," which came on, I believe, at six o'clock.

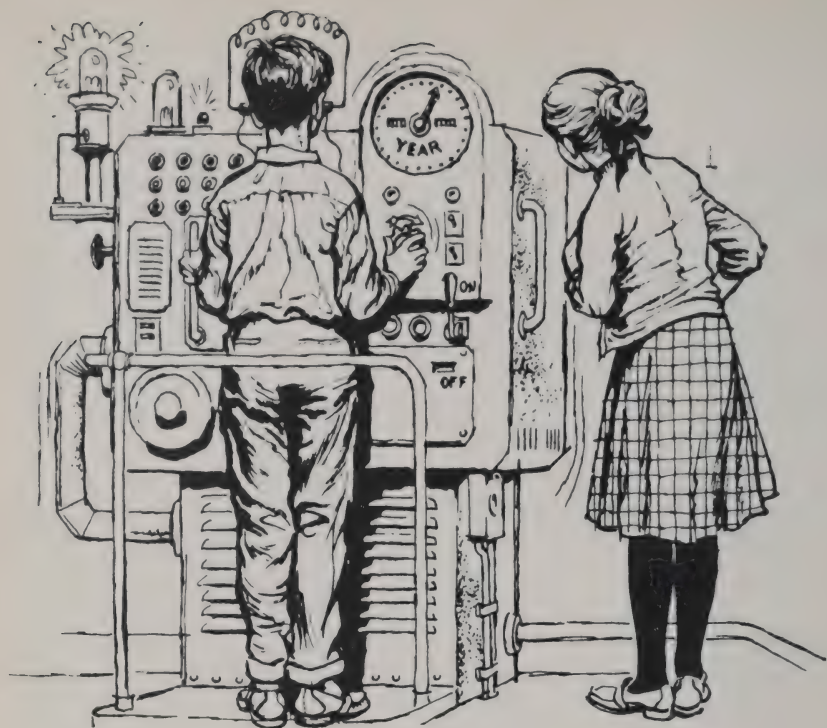
Buck was a space pilot who regularly visited planets, moons and asteroids, aided by his girl, Wilma, and the superb scientist, Dr. Huer. Buck's life was constantly endangered by the villainous Killer Kane and evil Martians.

Now this was very exciting listening in times when the only real rocket was something you launched on the Fourth of July. Our parents smiled indulgently, knowing that rocket ships and space travel would never be.

But look at things now. In the few short years from my radio days, we are probing space with rockets, orbiting satellites, and standing on the threshold of interplanetary travel. Scientists are unlocking the doors of wonders so swiftly that we cannot keep up with the vast new knowledge.

Since Buck Rogers days are almost here, let's gaze into the future and predict more marvels. I would not be surprised to see, sometime soon, a large, gun-metal gray machine standing in the corner of a classroom, buzzing and flashing lights. It probably will be called the "Inter-Galactic Reflected Light Quantum Captivator." Properly used, it will collect from outer space light once on the Earth, refocus it, and let you look back into ancient time. We can refer to it as the Time Machine.

A student of history will step on the platform, dial the date he wishes to visit, and back into history he will go, to see for himself. Impossible, you say? So were space ships a short while back.



In the book about to begin, we are going to look at past events in our village. I have jumped the gun and used the Time Machine. Turn on your imagination, step up and grab the handles.

First we will see how the land beneath our village became the way it is. Spin the dial back 300 million years.

THE LAND BENEATH US

The first thing you will find is that you are soaked to the skin, since the spot where Bronxville now stands was once on the ocean floor. Swimming to the surface, you won't see much, except for some volcanic peaks jutting from the Atlantic, blasting puffs of smoke and fire.

Now flick the dial to 200 million years ago, and keep turning it slowly toward the present while you dry off. At first you can see debris from the volcanic mountain islands wash down and gradually fill in the sea around them. Then the earth's crust begins to heave up above the water level during millions of years. The crust shifts and folds. Bronxville may have been a mountain top, or part of a valley.

Keep turning the dial. Watch as this rugged terrain is washed smooth by wind, rain, rivers and streams. This constant wearing away, or erosion, continues for 140 million years, unchallenged by the earth. At the end of this period, our part of America is a flat, coastal plain.

Turn the knob to 10 million years ago, which is only yesterday in the earth's history. Now the earth begins to heave up and shift once more, creating highlands. Rivers and streams begin to flow faster and faster down the slopes, cutting ridges and valleys. One of these rivers flowed into a narrow arm of the sea. It was the beginning of the Hudson. In time, the sea subsided and the river sluiced away at the rocks, forming the Hudson Valley.

The next force, which carved our land and village into roughly their present form was the Ice Age. It lasted in intervals for a million years. Vast sheets of ice—hundreds, even thousands of feet thick — ground down from the north, crushing and polishing, scouring the valleys and rounding off the mountains. Spin the Time Machine dial to 10 thousand years ago, and watch the last of the glacial ice melt, leaving traces still with us today — scratches in the surface rocks around Westchester, huge boulders poised here and there about our county, and deposits of smooth glacial pebbles.

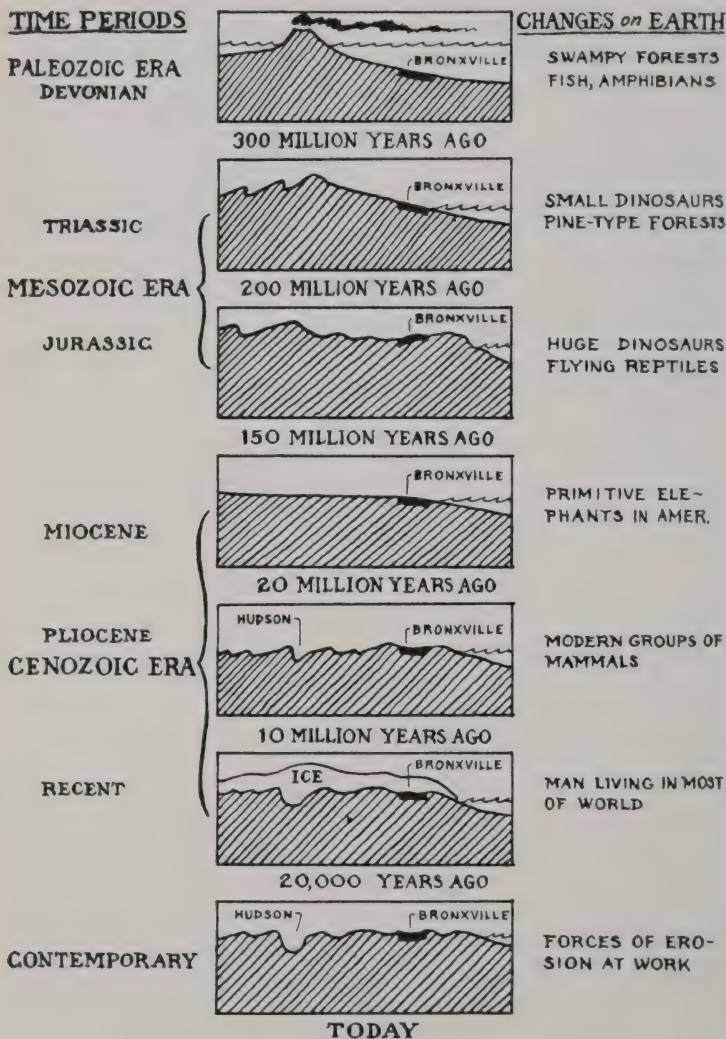
After the glaciers, the normal forces of erosion started again. Turn your dial to the present. Do you think Bronxville has arrived at its final shape? It hasn't. Each rain, each wind, each snow and frost works on the land, seeking to flatten the hills. We have slowed the pace of erosion with lawns and trees, walls and drainage systems, but however slowly, Nature is always grinding away at the land.

What's coming next? The Time Machine keeps blowing fuses when we try to look into the future, so all we can do

BRONXVILLE

Through 300,000,000 Years

A Terrain Profile



is guess. Bronxville's land will probably stay about the same for a long, long time, except for what new digging and building men do. But eventually, the sea may rise to cover our village, or a new shift in the earth's crust may lift it higher. One thing is certain: the land beneath is always changing through the ages.

Back when the ice retreated, the grasses and forests grew again. Game abounded in and around the site of Bronxville. At an undetermined time, but many centuries before the first explorers reached America, the Indians moved across our land. The tribes living in Westchester were called Mahicans¹, or Wolf Indians. They were of the same family as the Mohegans², who lived in Connecticut, and part of the larger Algonquin³ nation.

The Mahicans who lived or hunted where Bronxville stands were probably of the Weckquaesgeek (Wikagyl)⁴ tribe, and there may have been Siwanoy⁵, too. These Indians were tall, muscular and well proportioned. We know that Bronxville was a favorite hunting ground for the Indians. What is now called Bronxville Lake was then a larger pond, formed by a beaver dam located about where the waterfall splashes today. Indians trapped beaver by the thousands near the pond, and also otter and muskrat. The last beaver were observed here toward the end of the 1700's.

Up in the forested highlands of the village, later residents have turned up arrow and stone-ax heads, which indicates hunting parties often stalked game here, and camped. We are not sure that there was a permanent Indian settlement in Bronxville proper. It is possible. The tribal clans often selected hilltops for their stockaded villages, and the ridge lines in town certainly offered good locations. We can safely say that one or more Indian camps were at least near, if not in, Bronxville.

There is evidence that White Plains Road was originally a well-traveled Indian trail, and that Pondfield Road and Bronxville Road also were originally sections of Indian routes.

Turn on the Machine again and focus it on the area we know as Bronxville, in the year 1609.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Mah- <i>hee</i> -can | 2. Mo- <i>hee</i> -can | 3. Al- <i>gon</i> -kwin |
| 4. <i>Wek</i> -kways-geek (Y-ka-gill) | 5. <i>Sigb</i> -wa-noy | |

Part I
FRONTIER AFLAME
1609-1646



Little Wolf, pressed flat to the ground, inched across the few remaining feet and carefully parted the rushes along the Aquehung¹ River. He peered eagerly through the opening, then his breath hissed in disappointment. The deadfall trap had been sprung, but no animal lay beneath it. Naseck the Otter had escaped again.

The Indian boy sprang up, dark eyes blazing. He snatched an arrow from his belt, notched it against the bowstring and pulled. The arrow flashed, imbedding itself in the mud beside the trap.

"The next time it will be you, wise old otter," Little Wolf muttered. He jumped down, retrieved his arrow, and reset the trap. From a pouch on his hip he took a piece of rotted fish and placed it temptingly in the bait loop.

Squinting against the sun, the boy walked downstream to the beaver dam at the place where the river narrowed. He leaped from log to log, crossing to the eastern bank. Moving swiftly but quietly, Little Wolf skirted a thicket, eyes alert for rabbit, arrow ready in bow.

He climbed through a cornfield to the hilltop Mahican village. Past the opening in the palisade of logs, Little Wolf stalked across a patch of rocky land. Encircling it were several lodges of varying sizes. Each was constructed in the same fashion — two rows of green saplings set in the earth, then bent over and lashed at the top, forming a series of arches. Along the sides and top, split poles were tied to serve as lath for the covering of bark. Through narrow openings left at the top, morning cook fires smoked in lazy blue plumes.

The boy entered a large lodge shared by his parents and seven other families. Slowly adjusting his eyes to the smoky gloom, he saw his mother kneeling beside the fire pit, stirring a cornmeal porridge called sapaen². His baby sister, wrapped in a deerskin, lay on the bed of pine boughs. She gurgled happily at the flickering fire.

1. *Ab-kweh-hung* 2. *Sab-pane*



"So — my brave son of twelve summers returns as he goes!" Little Wolf's father strode forward from the shadows, scowling. "Where is the meat to flavor the sapaen? Have the otter, beaver, and hare outwitted the hunter?"

The boy bit his lip and bowed his head in shame. His father, Mountain Bear, was a great hunter, respected by the tribe. Little Wolf knew better than to offer an excuse.

The meal was eaten in silence, save for the noise of younger children in the lodge. The gruel was tasteless, but warm and filling. Mountain Bear, as head of the family, supplemented his breakfast with a slice of dried fish.

Wild shouting and the sound of many voices outside suddenly shattered the morning calm. Mountain Bear seized his war club and went out. Little Wolf gulped a last mouthful from the wooden bowl and followed.

In the center of the council ground stood a village brave, panting hard as though from a long run. Little Wolf was surprised to see him. Only yesterday the brave had left to fish for several days on the shores of Mahicanittuck³, the Great River. Around the fisherman, other men of the village

3. Ma-hee-can-ee-tuck

FRONTIER AFLAME

stood in groups, listening to his story. Little Wolf tried to get close enough to hear but his elders cuffed him out of the way.

Presently the men dispersed to their lodges, some running. The boy trotted along beside his father.

"Are the Mohawks coming?" he asked. He remembered grisly tales of the fierce warriors who lived many days journey to the north.

Mountain Bear shook his head, then stopped and took his son's arm. "Listen well. Take maize for two days, and your weapons. Wait for me at the palisade gate."

His father entered the lodge of the tribal chief, called Sachem¹ or Sagamore. Little Wolf ran to his home and filled his hunting pouch with parched cornmeal. His mother's questions came fast but he could only shrug in response. Something important had happened, but all Little Wolf knew was that he had been told to come with the men. It was enough. Curious and excited, he grabbed his bow and arrows and rushed out.

The men were gathering. The Sachem and his father came, with many others. Seeing the crowd, the chieftain raised his hand.

"There is no need for all braves to go. I will travel with ten. The rest stay here on watch."

Ten men were chosen, among them Mountain Bear. Little Wolf was not in the group. His father shook his head, then turned to go. The men set off down the steep hill on the run, heading west.

Those remaining began to barricade the gate in the wall, left open in time of peace. Little Wolf was ordered to carry logs. He worked hard, but his eyes wandered to the place in the woods where the men had disappeared. As he was sliding one end of a barrier in place, the boy found himself momentarily alone outside the palisade. Acting on impulse, he ran around the curve of the wall until he was beyond sight of the gate, then plunged down the hill. He circled into covering thicket and moved quietly around to the west where his elders had departed. Soon he found the trail they had taken, and set off after them. The knowledge that he was disobeying

1. *Say-chem*

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

the Sagamore did not cross his mind. He was filled only with excitement and wonder at what mystery lay ahead.

The trail was one often used and it was easy to follow. Eventually, he knew, it would lead to the Great River. Mile after mile, Little Wolf ran at a ground-covering trot. Only at ridge tops did he pause for breath. Older braves could run all day at the same easy pace, covering great distances.

Overhead, the sun reached toward noon, and heated the meadows in September warmth. His legs aching, Little Wolf topped the last ridge and halted. Beneath him, he saw the silver sheen of the River, framed by high pines on either side of the trail. He stood listening, but heard only the hum of locusts and the whistle of a quail. Remembering now that he had come without permission, the boy feared what might await him if he suddenly came upon his father and the Sagamore.

Little Wolf descended to the shore with caution. Avoiding the trail, he worked down through the trees. Even so, he almost blundered into a large group of Indians surging between rocky river bank and the edge of the woods.

From a hiding place behind a laurel clump, the boy surveyed the scene. Behind him were Indians of several tribes. From snatches of talk, he realized they were all Mahicans. He could understand the dialects, but many of their totems and amulets were unfamiliar.

All eyes were fixed upon the River. Little Wolf squinted against the dancing sparkle of the water. He could see nothing, save a canoe with two braves paddling near a headland to his left.

Suddenly a shout rang from the canoe. One of the Indians raised his paddle and pointed. The men on the shore fell silent. Some gripped their weapons tighter. Others fingered totems hanging from their necks. Then, from around the point, came a sight which froze them all.

Floating up the River came a high-sided craft, far larger than any canoe. Towering above it were billows of yellowed cloth suspended from poles taller than trees. Panels of vivid

FRONTIER AFLAME

color marked the vessel's sides and from the tips of the poles fluttered banners of orange, white, blue, red, gold and black.

Little Wolf stared in disbelief. The ghostly apparition moved slowly past, awesome in its splendor. Strangest of all, it marched upstream against the current, with no sign of paddles. At first the boy thought it might be a great bird, for it had a beak at the front. Then he saw what looked like men moving about on its back.

"Ay!" whispered Little Wolf reverently. "It is surely the great canoe of the almighty god Kickeron."

Presently the majestic craft passed from view. Still the tribesmen remained rooted, silent. The spell was broken when many began to run northward to follow its passage. The hum of voices rose as braves talked of what their eyes had seen.

Little Wolf, still wide-eyed, emerged from his hiding place and started up the slope. Wild thoughts drove caution from him, and he all but jumped from his skin when a hand gripped his shoulder. He turned to see his father.

No anger clouded Mountain Bear's face. The boy saw that his parent, too, was still awed by what he had seen. Together they joined the others from their village.



PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

"Is the world to end?" asked Little Wolf. "Has Kickeron come for us?"

The Sagamore halted and turned to face them all. "Listen and know, my people. Those were no Gods. I have talked to others from the south. They have gone in canoes to this strange thing, and have seen men such as you and I, only fairer in color."

"But who knows in what form Gods may appear?" asked Mountain Bear.

"One of the braves in the canoes let fly an arrow at these white men. The shaft caught one in the throat and he died." The Sachem paused, his eyes staring back toward the River. "Gods do not die at the sting of an arrow."

"It is true," murmured the others.

"What then?" asked Mountain Bear.

"I do not know," shrugged the chieftain. "But I felt a chill of death as I watched this craft glide by. Mark you well. Bad times will come of this."

FRONTIER LAND

The Great Canoe was the ship *Half Moon*, skippered by Henry Hudson. He was hired by the Dutch East India Company to find the long-sought Northwest Passage to the East Indies. He did not find the Passage, but he was very pleased with the lands he saw on the banks of the river later named for him. His reports interested Dutch merchants back home.

Off and on for 14 years, trading and exploring ships visited the Hudson and Long Island Sound. A Dutch fort was built near Albany and a lively trade in furs began. Dutch trading parties moved through Westchester offering knives, axes, hoes, cloth, blankets and kettles in return for furs. They came to Little Wolf's village and others, well-armed but seeking friendly exchange.

The first true settlers arrived near Albany in 1623. Other shiploads came and settled the lower tip of Manhattan Island,

FRONTIER AFLAME

which was named New Amsterdam. Manhattan was purchased from the Indians in 1626 for goods costing twenty-four gold dollars. The little colony around the fort at the Battery grew slowly. By 1628, there were only 270 settlers, including those up the Hudson. Shortage of horses and cattle made farming difficult. Nevertheless, the hardy people worked patiently and held on.

One of the chief problems in those days was the lack of understanding with the Indians. Not used to European ways, the Indian considered almost everything was his for the taking. This was his culture and training, but the Dutch considered it thievery. When it came to real estate, the Indian, in his ignorance, would "sell" land willingly, then continue to live on it. If someone else wanted to buy it, he would sell it all over again. As a result, things were very confused, tempers flared on both sides and there was trouble.

As they grew more used to the white settlers, the Indians grew less afraid of them, and became bolder. There were occasional shootings. A settler would turn his cattle loose in an Indian cornfield. The Indian, seeing his crop chewed up, would kill the cattle. Then the settler would call for soldiers and march against the Indians.

Some Dutchmen, such as David DeVries, understood the Redmen and were trusted and loved by the Indians. But most of the Dutch, especially the Governors of New Amsterdam before Peter Stuyvesant, considered the Indians lowly pests, to be dealt with harshly. Flames were being kindled for terror on the Frontier.

We think of the Far West when we hear the word "Frontier", but in those days, our Westchester area was all wild frontier. There were no settlers in Westchester until 1639, when Jonas Bronck, a wealthy Dane, purchased 500 acres between the Harlem and Aquehung Rivers. Bronck built barns, barracks, a tobacco shed and a house of stone which stood near the present railroad station at Morrisania. Soon this land was referred to as "Bronck's Land," or "Bronck's", from which we get the name "Bronx" for that area, "Bronx River" for the Aquehung, and much later, the name of our village "Bronxville".

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

No sooner had Bronck and his family settled on their estate than the sparks of friction on the frontier kindled into flame. Little Wolf's Sagamore had prophesied "bad times," and they came.

WARPATH

It is strange how one isolated event can cause a chain reaction which explodes with terrible force. It happens with nuclear explosions. It can happen, too, when people form the links of the chain. Climb back on the Time Machine. Set it for the Island of Manhattan, 1626.

On lower Manhattan, between Broadway and Chatham Street today, a trail came down from the north and passed beside a pond called The Kolck. Down this trail came two Indian braves and an Indian boy. They were Mahicans of the Weckquaesgeek tribe, whose village lay near the future site of Bronxville. Each carried a pack of furs. They had worked hard and long to trap and cure them, and now they came to New Amsterdam to trade them for things they needed.

Below the Kolck, three farmers were laboring for Director-General Peter Minuit. One of them looked up and spied the approaching Indians.

"Jan! Crol! See what's coming!" He nudged the others.

"Savages carrying furs. So?"

"So this!" The first farmer seized his musket and aimed it at the nearest Indian. "Drop the furs here! We'll take them!"

The Indians halted, puzzled and afraid, but they made no move to give up their packs.

With a snarl, the farmer fired, killing one brave instantly. Before he could reload, the other trappers dashed for cover and made it safely. The Indian boy looked back, hatred clouding his eyes. It was his uncle who sprawled dead by the Kolck. By tribal law, the nephew must avenge him when he reached manhood. The lad muttered his vow between clenched teeth, then turned to flee.

Turn ahead to 1641. The nephew, now an adult brave, returns alone to New Amsterdam, his face grim. He carries

FRONTIER AFLAME

a small packet of wampum. At his hip hangs a razor-edged tomahawk.

At the home of Claes Smits he stops. Smits, an honest wheelwright, was not even remotely connected with the original murder. The brave makes signs for trade, showing the wampum and pointing to some cloth Smits has in a chest. The Dutchman nods and leans over to haul out the cloth. The tomahawk flashes viciously against Smits' skull. He slumps dead in his tracks. Satisfied at last, the brave trots home. Another link in the chain is forged.

When news of Smits' murder spread through the colony, the Dutchmen were enraged. The Director-General, William Kieft, ordered the Indians to turn over the murderer. They refused. After bickering over the best method of handling the Redmen, an expedition of eighty soldiers marched up into present-day Westchester to capture the murderer. They may have passed close to Bronxville. When their guide became lost in the wilds, they were forced to return, emptyhanded. However, the Indians had seen them, and were disturbed. They wanted peace, and in 1642 they signed a treaty at Bronck's house, promising to turn over the murderer. They never did.

In spite of the treaty, Kieft was angry. His philosophy was that the only good Indian was a dead Indian. His stupid reasoning was strengthened when he heard of another murder of a settler on the west shore of the Hudson. The Indian murderer this time had been made drunk and had his beaver coat stolen by the Dutch, but for Kieft, this was no excuse.

The next link in the chain of bloody events started among the Indians. The fierce Mohawks, whom Little Wolf feared, swept down from the north with illegal firearms. They raided Indian villages in Westchester and across the Hudson, killing seventy and seizing many women and children. The local Indians fled south, seeking Dutch protection.

Kieft, seeing these hundreds of Mahican refugees camped close by, answered their appeal for help by sending troops at night to murder them as they slept. Some one-hundred and thirty friendly Indians were massacred, including babies, young children and their mothers. The next morning Kieft praised his

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

"brave" soldiers for their work.

The Frontier exploded. Eleven Algonquin tribes — Mahicans from New Jersey, Westchester, southern Connecticut and Long Island — took to the warpath in 1643. Spine-chilling yells from paint-daubed faces rang through the hills and valleys that year — the "year of blood". Farms and settlements within fifty miles of New Amsterdam were sacked and burned, with many occupants slaughtered or carried away as captives. In one week alone, the Indians, regained most of their land, while the Dutch huddled inside the fort at the Battery, watching the results of Kieft's stupidity.

Now focus the Time Machine more closely on this terrible year and see what events occurred near the future site of Bronxville. We can guess that local Indians, living perhaps in our village, took part in the bloody raids. Not far away, close to the Hutchinson River near the present Bronx-Mount Vernon border, the Machine shows a wooden house and sheds, surrounded by fields and forest. It is a peaceful scene, on this hot day in August, 1643.

THE MASSACRE

Anne Hutchinson stood in her doorway, gazing into the tall forest across the clearing. She was a handsome English-woman of fifty, her face weathered and careworn, but reflecting great strength of purpose.

Nine years before, she and her husband, William, had come to America with their ten children, seeking religious freedom. They landed in Boston, where her charm and force of character made her popular among the settlers. But she found her religious beliefs at odds with those of the Puritans. In 1638 the Hutchinsons were banished and went to Rhode Island, where William died. Anne and her children again fled, this time to New Netherlands. In 1642 she obtained permission from the Dutch to settle on a tract of land purchased by them in 1640. Ironically, this tract was called Vredeland — "land of peace." It included part of present southern Westchester. Captain James Sands, a member of her party, had started



building her house, but the Indians had scared him away, and the building was completed by her servants, friends, and older children.

Anne shifted her gaze to the meadows. Fields had been plowed and corn planted. Next year she would clear more land to the west. Someday it would be a good farm, if the savages left her in peace. She bit her lower lip, remembering the bad news from New Amsterdam. The Indians were restless, moving through the country in larger bands than usual. There had been fighting here and there.

From inside the house came the sound of childish laughter. Susannah, her eight-year old daughter, ran to Anne, brandishing a small bow and arrow. It had been given to her by Wampage, a local Sagamore who seemed enchanted by the little girl. "Mother, I wish to be an Indian when I grow up, and dress in leather and feathers and —"

"And smell to heaven and have bugs!" finished her mother, with a twinkle. "Susannah, you'll do no such thing. You will be a fine Christian lady or I'll know the reason why. Not put down your toy and get ready for supper!"

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

There were eleven seated at the table that evening, Anne, eight of her family, and two servants. When they had finished, the summer sun hung low in the treetops.

Leaving the table, Anne motioned to one of the servants. They stepped outside. The evening was still. Heat from the day lingered in the earth, rising from the grass and stones.

"John I'm concerned. There has been trouble with the savages elsewhere. For the first time I don't feel safe here." Anne brushed a strand of hair from her forehead. Her eyes scanned the forest. "Did you see Wampage today?"

"Aye, ma'am. He came by at noon. We gave him food."

"Was he alone?"

"Aye. Seemed kind of stiff this visit. Didn't play with Susannah much. He kept looking around as if he'd never seen the place."

They fell silent, listening in the soft summer twilight, watching the trees darken against the sky. Crickets chirped in the fields. The air was sultry, making it difficult to take a deep breath.

Suddenly a whip-poor-will called from the woods to their right. Another answered from the left.

The servant looked askance at Anne.

"I don't know," she said, "They might have been real. Are the muskets loaded?"

"I'll check the priming, ma'am."

"Let's get inside and bar the shutters." They hurriedly reentered the house. Anne counted noses to make sure all were inside, then dropped the bars across the door. The servants saw to the windows. On the south, shutters had not been made as yet. Oiled paper covered the openings. Anne eyed them with concern.

The routine of washing up and getting younger children to bed went on as it always did, with clattering, splashing, laughing and protests. It was at this time that Anne noticed there was but one pail of water remaining in the house. After opening the door again and listening, she sent John out with a yoke of buckets to fill at the stream. She herself stood by the door, musket ready.

FRONTIER AFLAME

Darkness obscured the woods. The western sky remained the last foothold of light. Once more Anne heard the mournful call of the whip-poor-will, closer now.

A man's scream shrilled from somewhere near the stream, lasting for an instant. Anne took a step forward, lifting the heavy gun.

"John?" she called. Only stillness answered.

She stepped back inside, a chill shaking her, despite the heat. Quickly she barred the door and posted the remaining servant to cover the south windows with his musket. Her son and son-in-law held pistols. The others gathered by the fireplace in the keeping-room, wide-eyed as they sorted powder and shot, ready to reload the muskets. Susannah whimpered in her sleep.

It was over almost before it began. First the sheds went up in sudden flames, the glow lighting the night blood-red. With hideous yells, a war party of Indians circled the house, brandishing tomahawks, knives and a few muskets. Three fire-arrows arched rocketlike, landing on the roof of the house. Immediately it began to smoulder, then flame.

Wampage, followed by several braves, hurled his painted body through the paper windows. Anne and the servants fired, but had no time to see if they had hit. More Indians broke in. Tomahawks rose and fell.

The chieftain Wampage seized Anne and killed her with a blow on the skull. Then he searched until he found Susannah, cowering beneath her bed. Slinging her over his shoulder, he drew the bars from the door and ran out. The other Indians followed, loaded with booty.

By now the house was a roaring furnace. Sentries at the fort in New Amsterdam could see the glow in the sky, but they knew it was too late to send help. It burned as a funeral pyre for a courageous pioneer woman and nine of her kin and servants. Dawn came, to reveal only smoking ashes and embers. The settlement was wiped out completely, save for little Susannah. She would have her wish of earlier that fateful day. She would become an Indian. Four years later when she was freed from the savages, she had forgotten her own language, and wanted to remain with her captors.

REPRISALS

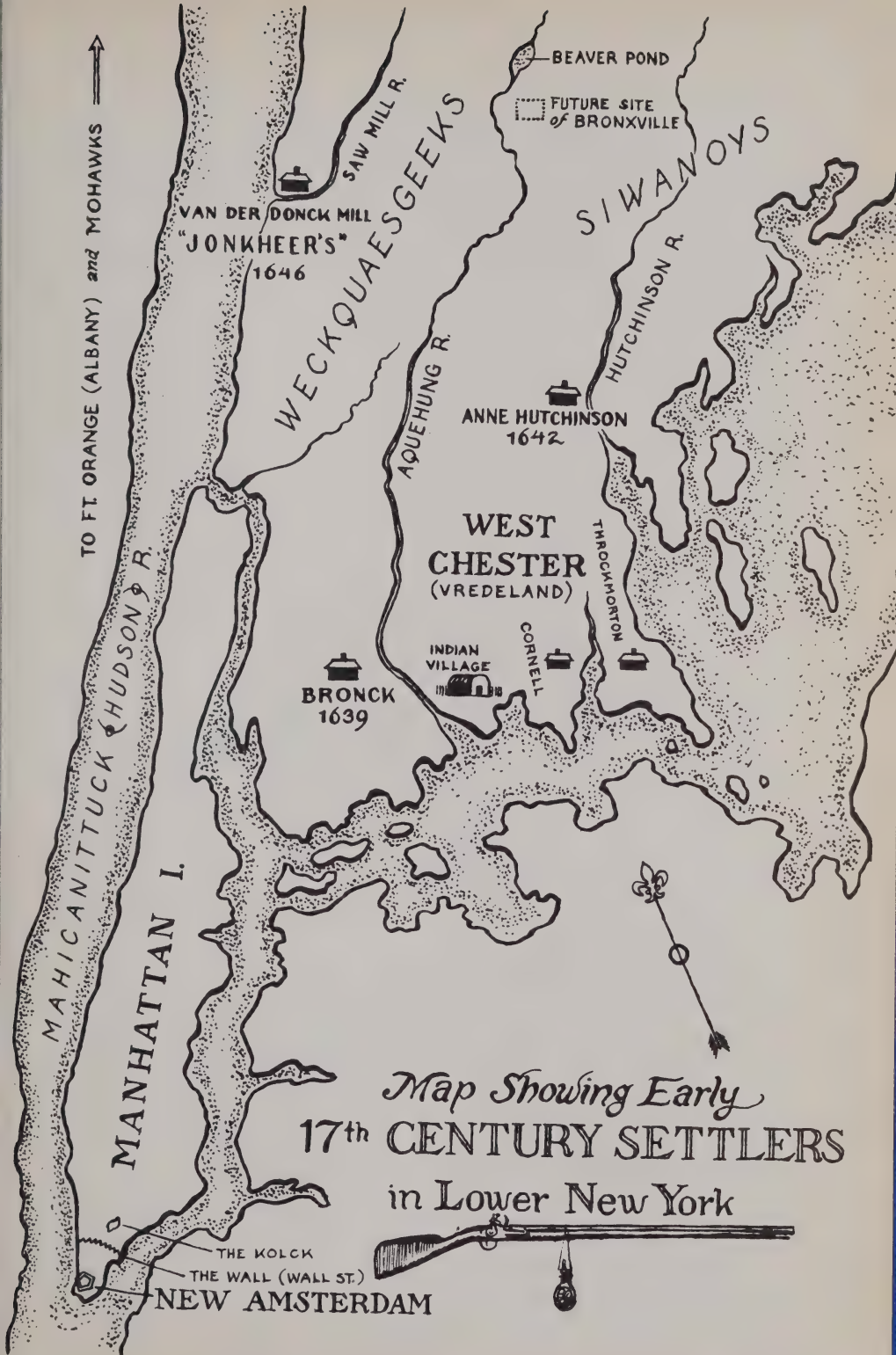
The name of Anne Hutchinson has come down through time and is still with us today. The school on Mill Road is named for her and the Bronxville Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution proudly bears her name. The stream which ran near Anne's house we now call the Hutchinson River, as well as the parkway beside it. Even the Indian, Wampage, who killed her, helped carry forward her name. By Mahican custom, a brave took the name of his victim. Wampage thereafter was called Ann Hoeck, probably Dutch-Indian corruption of Hutchinson.

On the same night of the Hutchinson massacre, two other plantations north of the Harlem River were burned — those of John Throckmorton and Thomas Cornell, both located south of Anne Hutchinson's. Jonas Bronck's house, outbuildings and plantation were laid waste by the Indians about the same time. As a result, Westchester was again a wilderness.

The Dutch headquarters in New Amsterdam was helpless. Poor at the start of the Indian troubles, it now was impoverished by the destruction of the farms and crops before harvest. There was not enough money in the treasury to clothe or supply the few soldiers available. It was left for Englishmen living in the colony to strike back at the Indians.

In April, 1644, Captain John Underhill led a force against the Canarsee tribe on Long Island. Underhill had served under Captain John Mason against the Pequot Indians in Connecticut, and was a ruthless, experienced Indian-fighter. He killed 120 Canarsees in one village, returning two to Fort Amsterdam for torture by the frustrated Dutch.

Next, Underhill was sent with 150 Dutch and English troops to Greenwich, Connecticut. After an all-day march, they came upon a Siwanoy village near the town of Bedford in upper Westchester. Attacking at midnight, the soldiers charged the stronghold. The tribesmen put up determined resistance but were no match for the firepower of Underhill's men. The village was burned. Inside, some 500 Indians died silently and bravely in the flames. The Siwanoyes were all but exterminated as a people in this battle. On August 30, 1645, a general treaty was signed with the Westchester Indians. A bitter peace was enforced on the frontier.



Map Showing Early
17th CENTURY SETTLERS
in Lower New York

Part II
WOLVES AND WITCHES
1647-1787



BACK TO THE LAND

In 1646 a wealthy Dutchman named Adriaen Van der Donck came down the Hudson from near Albany and bought a wide tract of land extending sixteen miles north of the Harlem River. He built a fine house and saw mill, and brought in colonists to work the land. Locally he was known as "de Jonkheer", a title of respect, and the area was called "Jonkheer's". The spelling has changed but much of this area today we still call Yonkers. The Nepperhan River where Van der Donck built his mill soon became known as the Saw Mill River. Once again white settlers returned to the frontier of Westchester.

1647 brought famous peg-legged Peter Stuyvesant to New Amsterdam as Director-General of the Dutch colony. He was a high-handed tough old soldier, but he treated the Indians with more intelligence than did the former governor, Kieft. When Stuyvesant was away with his troops on an expedition to the south in 1655, a squaw was shot while picking peaches in a Dutchman's orchard in New Amsterdam. The Indians were inflamed once more, sweeping down on Van der Donck's plantation and Manhattan. Virtually defenseless, the Dutch lost 100 settlers and 150 others were captured by the Indians. 300 colonists lost all their worldly goods.

Stuyvesant and the soldiers returned too late to counter the attack. Instead of setting out to massacre the Indians, the Director-General kept his head and ransomed many of the prisoners. Then he strengthened his defenses and ordered that no armed Indian ever again be allowed inside a Dutch settlement.

Eight years later northern tribes came down and killed or captured 70 Dutchmen near present-day Wall Street in New York. Since this was an isolated raid by "foreign Indians," Stuyvesant used strength instead of diplomacy and all but wiped out these intruders. This marked the end of serious Indian troubles in our area.

During these years, the English had been settling New England and there were constant disputes over the border between New Netherlands and Connecticut. In 1652 the home

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countries of England and Holland began a two-year war. In 1654 an Englishman, Thomas Pell of Fairfield, Connecticut, bought from Ann Hoeck, Anne Hutchinson's murderer, a tract of land called West Chester, including most of what is now Pelham, Eastchester, New Rochelle, Mt. Vernon and the eastern Bronx. Peter Stuyvesant said this was Dutch territory, the English said they had bought it, and so it went, with many threats but little action. The settlers swung with the wind, worrying more about making a living than to which country they officially belonged.

Finally in 1664, King Charles II of England gave to his brother, the Duke of York, the territory between the Connecticut River and Delaware Bay. An English expedition led by Colonel Richard Nicolls sailed to New Amsterdam. Faced by overpowering British superiority of arms, Peter Stuyvesant held on until ships' guns were run out and aimed at Manhattan. Then he surrendered. New Netherlands became New York. Once, for a year in 1673-74, the Dutch regained control, but the English took over again and for good, until the American Revolution.

In 1666 an important event occurred on or near the future site of Bronxville. Here, according to legend, stood an Indian "castle" or fort. Whether it was actually on Sunset Hill as the historical marker indicates, is extremely doubtful. Wherever its exact location, this settlement was Little Wolf's home when Hudson came, and fifty-seven years later it was the stronghold of the Mahican Sagamore, Gramatan. On October 8, 1666, a royal patent for Thomas Pell's earlier purchase was granted by Governor Nicolls to Pell and his friends. A parallel purchase agreement was countersigned by the Sachems Gramatan, Ann Hoeck, Wariatripus and by Thomas Pell, officially and formally turning over the land to the British colonists.

NORTH RIDING ON THE MAIN

When the English took over New Netherlands, Westchester was called by the fine name of "North Riding on the Main." With English in control, and the Indians no longer

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on the warpath, settlers came rapidly to our country. Since this is a story of our village, Bronxville, we don't have time to see how all the towns around us came to be, but we can take a quick look. It's fun to see where some of the names came from.

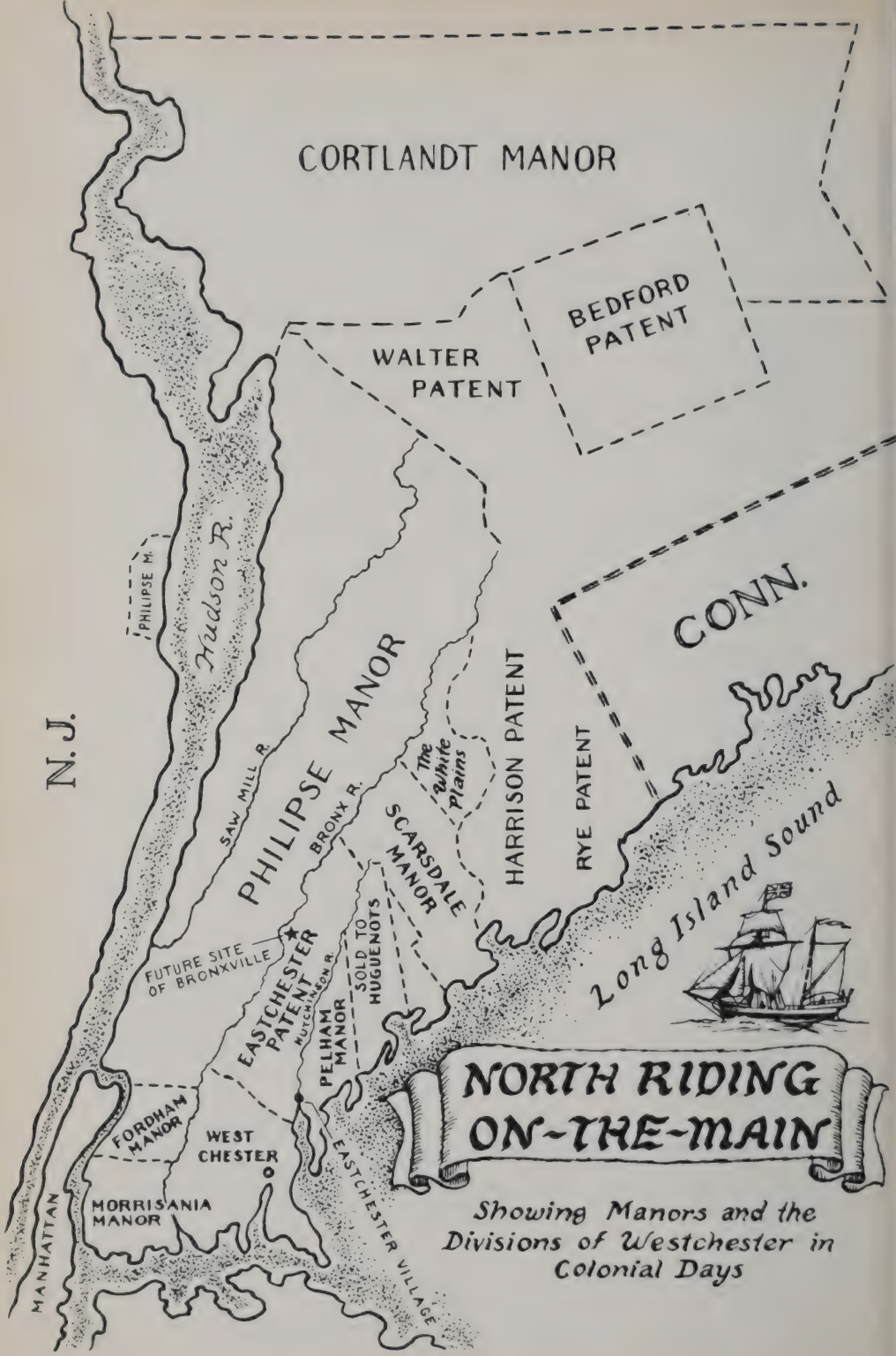
We have already learned about the names Bronx and Yonkers and Hutchinson and the Saw Mill River. You can guess how Pelham got its name — from Thomas Pell. Pell's land was given the title of manor and he was its lord. Another manor was Scarsdale, granted to Caleb Heathcote. You have probably driven along Heathcote Road and through Heathcote Center, near Scarsdale.

Other old manors were Cortlandt, in the northwest section of the county, Philipse Manor, along the Hudson, Fordham Manor, and Morrisania, which you pass through on the train to New York. Morrisania was originally part of Bronck's estate, and was later purchased by Captain Richard Morris. It became a manor under his son, Lewis Morris, in 1697. By manor we mean a tract of land granted to one person to administer. Persons leasing the owner's land were free to come and go — not like the serfs of feudal manor days. The lords of the manor, such as Pell and Philipse and Van Cortlandt, were much like present day "landlords", a term which has come down from manor days.

In 1670, Francis French and Ebenezer Jones bought a "square mile" of land on the Yonkers side of the Bronx River. Today this land is still partially bounded by Mile Square Road. It was a favorite camping spot for both British and American troops during the Revolution.

New Rochelle was originally part of Pell's Manor. In 1687 it was purchased by French Protestants called Huguenots, who had fled France because of religious persecution. Over ensuing years more Huguenots landed and settled here, naming it New Rochelle after the Huguenot stronghold in France, La Rochelle.

Many of the names in Bronxville and Westchester County are taken from the original inhabitants, the Indians. Such names include Sagamore, Gramatan, Siwanoy, Wikagyl, Tucka-



CORTLANDT MANOR

BEDFORD
PATENT

WALTER
PATENT

CONN.

N.J.

Hudson R.

PHILIPSE MANOR

HARRISON PATENT

RYE PATENT

SCARSDALE
MANOR

*The White
Plains*

FUTURE SITE
OF BRONXVILLE

EASTCHESTER
PATENT

SOLD TO
HUGUENOTS

PELHAM
MANOR

FORDHAM
MANOR

WEST
CHESTER

MORRISANIA
MANOR

Long Island Sound



**NORTH RIDING
ON-THE-MAIN**

*Showing Manors and the
Divisions of Westchester in
Colonial Days*

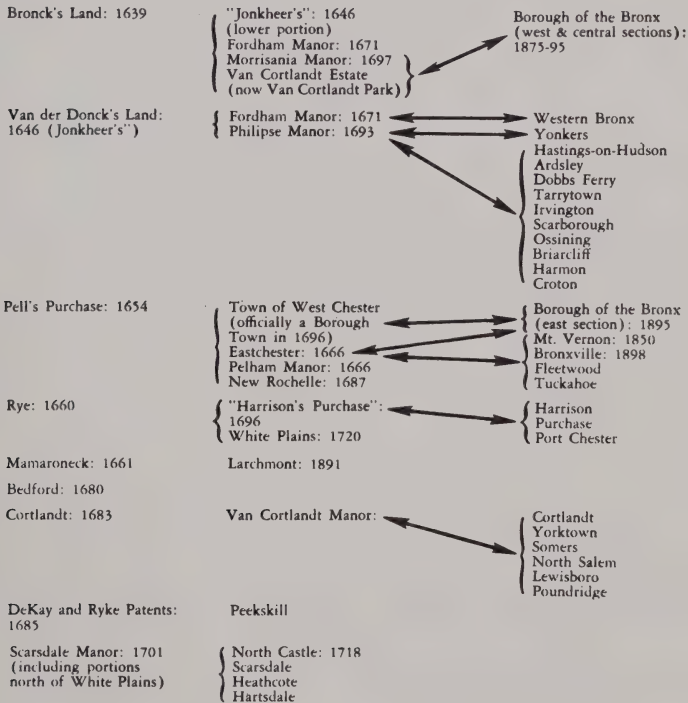
WOLVES AND WITCHES

hoe, Mamaroneck, Chappaqua, Kisco, Ossining, Armonk, Kensico, Katonah, and Sing Sing.

Our section of New York officially became Westchester County in 1683. It was named after the town of West Chester, one of the oldest settlements under Pell's purchase of 1654. The county government was in West Chester town until the courthouse burned in 1759. Then it was shifted to its present location at White Plains. The old town of West Chester has lost its identity in the built-up area of the east Bronx.

Here is a chart of some of the main settlements in Westchester County and beside it you will see other settlements which broke off from the first ones. There isn't space to list all of the towns in the county, but you can guess by their location on the map from which early settlement they sprang.

A FAMILY TREE OF SOME WESTCHESTER TOWNS



COLONIAL DAYS

Westchester continued to grow in the late 1600's and early 1700's. In 1700 there were about 1500 settlers in the county. By 1750 there were 11,000. This doesn't sound like many today, but it represents a dynamic growth in those early days of hardship.

By now, the Indians were no longer a threat. Except when a brave obtained an oversupply of "firewater" and went on a drunken spree, the colonists no longer were bothered. Gradually the tribes sold off their last parcels of land. Many remained to live in small settlements in the forest where they were free to hunt. Some worked for the whites as slaves. But most drifted north to join their kinsmen, the Mohegans. A large group under the sachem Nimham, formed a settlement at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and returned to Westchester to fight the British during the Revolution. Later, these Indians moved to upper New York State and drifted west from there.

Even without the Indian threat, Westchester was still a wilderness. Settlements were scattered and small. If you were riding through the county on horseback, you would see heavy woods, streams still abundant with fish, forests concealing deer, bear and smaller game. Occasional farms dotted the bottom land in river valleys, with saw and grist mills located on fast-running reaches. On the coast and Hudson, towns were engaged in fishing, oystering, and coastal shipping to Manhattan. Crops growing in the cleared fields were corn, wheat, rye, tobacco, flax, buckwheat, peas and apples. Trapping was still important in the winter. The houses ranged from slabwood cabins and clapboarded frame to stone or brick houses of Dutch, English or French style, depending on the locality.

What was life like then? — Plug in the Time Machine again and take a close look. Turn the dial to February, 1710. Snow covers the site of Bronxville, powdering the trees, sifting deep onto the forest floor. No houses are here yet. Even the former Indian cornfields are overgrown with briars and weeds. Huddled in the saddle of a heavy-boned farm horse, a boy squints against the driving snow. He heads east along the old Indian trail from the Hudson.

A WILD RIDE AND A WELCOME HEARTH

Tom Drake, at age 14, was considered a man by his father, as far as work went. He did his share of plowing, harvesting, barn-building, fence-mending and whatever other chores were waiting. He was a stocky, black-haired boy — strong for his age and bright, although his schooling was scant. The minister had taught him to read and write a little, and keep accounts, but he had finished all that a year ago.

Today he had been sent across the county to Philipse Manor settlement on the Hudson where his Uncle Elias worked in a mill. Now, with the letter to his uncle delivered and two sacks of cornmeal slung behind the saddle, Tom was heading home to the farm in Eastchester.

He let the mare pick her own pace through the snow. Early winter nightfall was upon them and the footing was treacherous in places. Crossing the Bronx River on ice, the horse slipped twice, even with sharpened caulks on her shoes.

Tom looked at the black woods looming above him on either side and shivered. It was a wild night. The whistle of the blizzard in the trees and the creaking of branches made him think of witches and ghosts. Many of his friends thought the Widow Gibbs was a witch. She lived by herself in a cabin on a hill near home and was very old. She shared her meager food with animals from the woods and the boys thought she had cast a spell over them. Tom didn't believe it. Not really. Still, on a night like this, you couldn't be too sure.

He pulled his wool muffler tighter and tried to think about less scary things, like supper and a warm fire. The mare plodded on, her steps muffled by the snow.

It was about five minutes later that he first heard the wolves. A single howl, carried on the wind, was followed by another to his right. Tom's first feeling was surprise. Most of the wolves had been cleaned out of this part of the county

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

years ago. The hard winter must have driven them south again.

A new chill of fear joined the boy's other cold shivers. When he heard another howl, closer this time, he kicked the mare in her ribs. She picked up to a trot, then a gallop.

Tom looked back into the night. The snow came thick and hard. He could see perhaps twenty paces along the trail. It was empty — so far.

The horse topped a rise, her breath coming in hard puffs of vapor which streamed back along her flanks. Tom leaned forward until his face touched her mane. He didn't need to spur her. The mare knew what was behind them. She stretched out her legs and flew down the next slope.

The boy squinted against the snow, searching for the shape of landmarks. They came whistling by a lonesome giant of an oak tree which he remembered. He reined the mare to the right, slightly.

"Twenty minutes," he whispered. "Oh, Lord — just give us twenty minutes more!" He held tighter with his legs. There wasn't time to stop and build a fire — he could never find enough dry wood to kindle a flame with flint and steel and get a roaring fire high enough to hold off the wolves.

On they flew. Past a clump of hemlocks, they cut the York trail (today's White Plains Road). Tom yanked the mare around in mid-air and sent her south along the rough road. Once more he looked over his shoulder. The snow had eased up slightly. He thought he could see dark shapes behind him. He blinked and looked again. Then he heard a savage yelp and he was sure. They were almost upon him.

One chance remained. He had his father's pistol in his belt. One shot against the pack. No time to reload, but if he could kill or wound one of them, the others might stop long enough to devour it.

The mare was tiring now. Tom could feel her straining. He reached inside his coat and felt the butt of the pistol. The priming had been in all day. He prayed it wasn't damp. His fingers closed around the gun but he left it inside until the last second.

The ghostly shapes were near, practically at the horse's heels. One pulled forward along Tom's right. It was huge,

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its shaggy head higher than his stirrup. The beast lunged up, jaws agape, hurling itself against horse and rider.

Tom snatched the pistol at that instant and pulled the trigger. It flashed and fired, the muzzle almost against the wolf's head. Tom felt a heavy push against his ankle, saw the wolf drop beneath the horse's hooves. The hideous snarling and howling behind him were welcome sounds. The pack had stopped to turn cannibal. He had gained a precious minute or two.

The horse sensed the escape and seemed to catch her second wind. She flew as fast as any farm horse ever galloped, the meal sacks pounding with every stride.

Rounding a bend, Tom saw the candlelights of home, a hundred yards off. So did the mare. Disdaining the road, she jumped a rail fence, all but losing the boy and the grain, and skidded on her haunches to a stop by the door. Tom half climbed, half fell off, his legs numb and stiff. To the howl of



PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

a wolf close behind, the boy burst into the house, hauling the horse with him.

His mother was speechless at the sight of the horse clattering across her scrubbed floors, but Tom's father had heard the wolves. Livestock was too precious to worry about floors. Before Tom had caught his breath to speak, his father had taken a musket and flung open the door again. Firelight reached into the darkness, and reflected back from a circle of slanted green eyes. Drawing a bead, he fired at a spot dead center between a pair of eyes. There was a choked howl, then silence. Two by two, all of the eyes disappeared into the night.

"Tom!" called his father. "Take a lantern and lead the mare up to the stable now. I think the shot and lights have scared 'em off. Hurry up!"

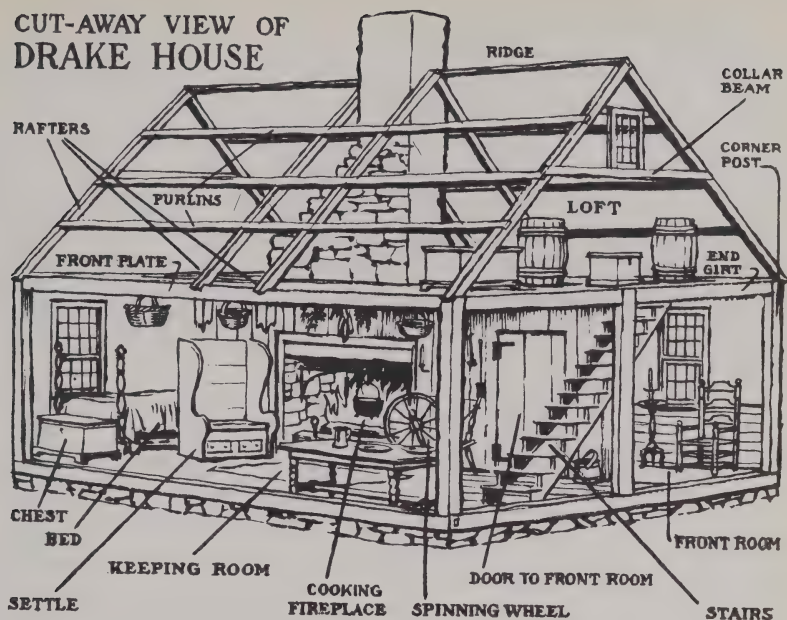
While the boy rubbed down his horse and gave her an extra large supper, Tom's father cut off the head of the wolf he had shot, then dragged the carcass through the snow, away from the house. The head he threw into the woodshed. He would receive a ten shilling bounty when he turned it in to the town officials.

Scarcely twenty minutes after Tom's first precipitous arrival, all of the Drakes once more were inside the house, with the door firmly latched and a fresh log blazing cheerily in the eight-foot fireplace. They all listened while Tom recounted his adventures — Mr. Drake sitting by the fire on the high-backed settle, Mrs. Drake and Tom's twelve year old sister, Nancy, busy fixing supper.

"Never knew 'em to come down so far in recent years," commented Mr. Drake, lighting his pipe. "Why, the varmints would've walked in the door if I'd let 'em!"

While Tom eats his bread and venison steak and sips his tea, let us look around the Drake home. It is a one-story frame house, with clapboarding outside and rough white plaster and panelled wooden walls inside. Mr. Drake and neighbors built it themselves. The windows have small panes of glass in the sashes. Floors are wide chestnut boards. Overhead you can see the stout beams supporting the floor of the garret above.

CUT-AWAY VIEW OF DRAKE HOUSE



Downstairs there are two rooms — a “best room” on the front or south side, and a family room and kitchen, where the Drakes are sitting now. Right in the middle of the house rises a massive chimney of granite slabs, with fireplaces in both front and back rooms. Off the back of the house is a shed which serves as a pantry and wood shed.

The “best” room is for entertaining guests. In it are the Drakes’ nicest pieces of furniture — a cupboard with some pewter tankards and plates, three wooden chairs, two small tables with candlesticks on them, a low-backed settle and a guest bed. On the floor is a small rug, and on the wall, a framed mirror.

In the family or “keeping-room” is a high-backed pine settle by the fire, a rough wooden bench, a plank table, one chair, some sections of tree trunk without bark for the children to sit on, a spinning-wheel, a loom, one chest of drawers, one plain chest, and a double bed. This room serves as kitchen, with a crane in the fireplace supporting iron pots and a kettle. In the rear wall of the fireplace, to the right, is a recessed oven for baking. Various cooking tools hang near the fire. Other utensils are stored in the pantry.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

From the beams overhead hang a musket, baskets of cornmeal and dried peas, and dried herbs.

Besides the fire, light comes from iron candlesticks stuck in the paneling. A candle-mold stands near the hearth.

Up a narrow ladder is the garret, where Tom and Nancy sleep on straw mattresses on either side of the chimney. The garret is bitter cold in winter, hot in summer. A small window at either end provides light in the daytime. The childrens' few clothes and possessions are stored in small, trunk-like chests.

Out in the barn are a yoke of oxen, the mare, two cows, a calf, and three hogs. A few chickens roost here and there. Mr. Drake keeps his heavy farm tools on pegs in the walls. Overhead, the loft contains hay and bundles of flax.

Chamber pots and slop bucket are the bathroom facilities in the house. A brass tub, with water heated on the fire, is used for weekly bathing and laundry.

Back in the keeping-room, Tom finished his supper, and began cleaning his father's pistol. In a circle before the fire, each member of the family was now occupied with hand work. Mr. Drake shaped a new ax handle, Mrs. Drake spun wool yarn on the wheel and Nancy mended her father's buckskin hunting shirt. They worked until the fire grew dim, then made their way to bed, first taking the chill off the icy bed clothes with a long-handled warming pan filled with embers.

Tom stretched out on his pallet, yawned once, and was asleep, too tired to think or dream about wolves or witches. At dawn he would be up and in the barn, milking the cows and feeding the stock.

PIONEER SPIRIT

This was about what life was like around our county in the early days. It was uncomfortable by our standards. Everyone worked while there was light to see. There were few things to buy and even less money to buy them with, so each farm family produced most of life's necessities right at home.

The farm, the stock, and the woods, streams and ocean gave food. Flax, raw wool, and animal skins gave material

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for clothing. Forests at hand gave lumber. The earth gave stone. Settlers like Mr. Drake had to be lumberjacks, masons, carpenters, farmers, hunters, and most of all — improvisers — to exist on the land. The women had to be just as versatile in their regular jobs of home and child care as well as carding, spinning, weaving, sewing, candle and soap making, and a hundred other jobs.

If you think life was all hard work and no fun, then you must remember something: real happiness is obtained through hard and successful work. The Drakes and others had the satisfaction of seeing things carved from the wilderness by their skill. Their houses, their fields, each small possession they owned was appreciated all the more because they themselves had created it, or struggled hard to earn money to buy it. These were the people who gave us our country, and we should never lose sight of the lesson they left for us.

We don't have the same jobs as they did, but we can tackle our jobs with their spirit and enthusiasm. If we do, our village and country will continue to grow and remain free, and someday, a long time from now, people will be reading about us with pride. Don't forget, we are pioneers in a new age. History hasn't stopped.

The Drakes were average settlers — perhaps above average in some ways. Others lived in cruder homes, with fewer possessions. Others still were the wealthier landowners, whose houses and furnishings were finer. They could afford to buy imported goods and clothing from Europe. But rich or poor, the spirit of equality bloomed and flourished in the new America.

There were some activities which relieved the monotony of farm life. Each settlement sent representatives to the Town Meetings. Most men in the smaller towns had civic duties as well as their own work, such as serving as selectmen, constables, town clerks, justices of the peace, sheepmasters, tax collectors, etc.

"Trainbands" or militia were formed in each town by men between the ages of sixteen and sixty. When the drum rattled on the village green, men and boys dropped their work

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

and came running with their weapons. Later these groups would provide "Minute Men" for General Washington.

The churches were the center of community life. Here the families gathered to worship on the Sabbath, and afterwards visited and exchanged news in the churchyard. The minister was often the only educated man in the community, and many times doubled as schoolmaster or tutor.

Other social gatherings were weddings, funerals, house warmings and barn raisings. There were two annual county fairs in the early days — one at West Chester town in May, and another at Rye in October. The settlers flocked to these to buy and sell livestock and home products, and to have a good time.

A FAMOUS CHURCH CLOSE TO US

The Drake family went to the Eastchester church on Sundays. It was a wooden building then, but in 1764 the settlers began a new church on the same grounds. They built it of fieldstone and it still stands and is used today. Its name is Saint Paul's and it is located on Columbus Avenue in Mount Vernon.

Saint Paul's is of special importance to us. In the first place, it is located near Anne Hutchinson's land, where the terrible massacre took place in 1643. Secondly, a very important event occurred at Saint Paul's in 1733. The Royal Governor of New York, William Cosby, was trying to defeat ex-Chief Justice Lewis Morris in his bid for a place in the Westchester Assembly, and have his own candidate elected.

Cosby tried to rig the election. Eastchester citizens flocked to the village green at Saint Paul's to stand guard and insure that every colonist was free to cast his vote. Cosby's plot was foiled. Judge Morris won handsomely.

An apprentice printer, John Peter Zenger, watched the election and wrote it up for his newspaper, the *New York Gazette*, sparing none of the details of Cosby's unfair attempts to manipulate the vote. The *Gazette* refused to print Zenger's story, so the reporter, with Morris backing him, started his own



Old St. Paul's Church on Columbus Avenue, Mount Vernon.

paper, *The New York Journal*. The story was published at last.

The *Journal* presented the facts to the people, but Cosby and his corrupt followers were outraged. Zenger was charged with "seditious libel" and thrown into prison.

His trial was delayed for seven months. When it finally convened, Zenger was ably defended by Andrew Hamilton, who based his case on "the right — the liberty — of exposing and opposing arbitrary power by speaking and writing the truth". Zenger was acquitted by the jury.

This event was one of the first sparks which later flamed into the American Revolution. Free-minded independent Americans had challenged oppression by mother England and had

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

struck a blow for Liberty. Zenger's trial was so important that fifty-eight years later it became the basis for writing "Freedom of Speech and of the Press" into the Bill of Rights.

All this happened a short distance from us. Some time soon, ask your parents to drive down Columbus Avenue in Mount Vernon and visit old Saint Paul's. The churchyard is being restored to the way it looked in Zenger's time. The Freedom Bell of the church is a sister of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. Saint Paul's is one of our most important National Shrines.

EARLY CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Just as today, all early settlers in our area were not equally good and honest. Rotten apples found their way into the barrel. There was probably less crime, percentage-wise, than today because most people worked too hard to get into trouble. But there were some different notions about good and evil then.

One unhappy notion was about witchcraft, especially in the late 1600's and early 1700's. Women, and men too, who did not conform to rigid church doctrine and practice, or who lived unconventional lives, were often suspected of being witches. There was more of this in upper New England than in Westchester, but there were suspects here too. In 1670, people of the town of West Chester complained that Katherine Harryson was a witch, and she was later banished from the settlement.

Smuggling of liquor was a common crime. The coves and harbors of Westchester were ideal for smugglers, who found markets for their rum and spirits at local taverns, where the legal supply never met the demand. Other unscrupulous traders sold liquor to the Indians, who didn't need much to go on their own private warpaths.

Offenses against church and state laws were usually punished by imprisonment in the stocks or by whipping. Stocks and whipping posts were located near the church in each town, on the village green. Occasionally there was a hanging for serious crimes, usually from a stout tree limb. As time went on, old punishments gave way to fines and jail terms.

Our county was a farm area until well into the 20th century. As the farms grew in size and number, excess produce found its way to New York markets. In the early days before good roads and railroads, most of the farm goods were carted to towns on Long Island Sound or the Hudson, where coastal trading ships hauled them south to Manhattan.

A farmhouse of the Colonial period still stands nearby on Tuckahoe Road in Yonkers. It was built around 1750 on Philipse Manor land by Thomas Sherwood, a tenant farmer. Sherwood's son, Stephen, was a fighting patriot during the Revolution. After the war the vast land holdings of British-sympathizer Philipse were confiscated, including the Sherwood house. Stephen bought it back in 1785. In 1801 the house was acquired by Dr. John Ingersoll, first doctor in Yonkers.

Recently, the Sherwood farmhouse was purchased by the Yonkers Historical Society and is being restored to its appearance in Colonial times.

Surrounded by water on three sides, Westchester was somewhat isolated in the days before long bridges. Prior to the Revolution, the Harlem River was spanned at King's Bridge and Dyckman's Bridge, linking Manhattan with the Bronx. Elsewhere, ferries made connecting links. A ferry between Rye and Long Island was established in 1739, and another between the old town of West Chester and Whitestone, Long Island. On the Hudson, a Swedish family named Dobbs ran a ferry across to Rockland County. These early ferries were wide, open boats using oars and sails. Some were large enough to carry horses.

Westchester roads evolved slowly from Indian and game trails. Most of them were passable only on foot, horseback, or by ox cart. In 1671, a road to New England was laid out through Eastchester, along the old Indian trail called the "Westchester Way". This was the beginning of the Boston Post Road. A post rider carried mail between Boston and New York once a week in the summer and once every two weeks in the winter. The road to White Plains and Danbury also had post riders before the Revolution, and is still called

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE



White Plains Road, or Post Road, today.

Many saw mills and grist mills sprang up on the Hutchinson, Bronx, and Saw Mill Rivers as more and more settlers needed lumber and a convenient place to have their grain ground into flour and meal. There was a mill on the Hutchinson at Mill Road and Cooper's Corners, another at California Road and Union Corners, and one in our own village just north of where Pondfield Road West crosses the Bronx River.

SETTLERS ON THE LAND

During the late 1600s and 1700s more settlers moved to Eastchester. Back in 1664 Pell had granted land to ten friends and their families. This "Ten Farms" settlement was near the ruins of Anne Hutchinson's house. In 1700 a second treaty was signed with the Indians for the purchase of the "Long Reach", a narrow strip of disputed land claimed by New Rochelle, the town of West Chester, and the Pell family. "Long Reach" included the present area of Tuckahoe, Bronx-

WOLVES AND WITCHES

ville, and northwestern Mount Vernon. The Indians were paid in goods: 13 muskets, 12 coats, 12 tomahawks, 12 kettles, 2 adzes and 4 barrels of cider. A royal patent for the "Long Reach" was granted by Queen Anne in 1708, making it a part of Eastchester.

The earliest settlers in our village area are believed to be the Underhills (distantly related to Captain John Underhill, the Indian-fighter), and the Morgan family. John Underhill settled in Eastchester, probably in the first half of the 1700s. Specific records are lacking, but it is believed that he built his clapboard and frame home down in the Pond Field valley some time in the mid-1700s. The house was located on the site of today's apartment house on the northwest corner of Pondfield Road and Meadow Avenue. The bottom land was cleared for farming and apple orchards. On the Bronx River at Pondfield Road West, the Underhills built a saw and grist mill and dam below the old beaver dam. Today the River House apartments stand on the old mill site. A rough log



Home of Lancaster Underhill, Sr. Built before the Revolution on the west side of Pondfield Road, about where Meadow Avenue is today. It was once used as part of Miss Lyman's School.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

bridge spanned the stream below the mills and became known as Underhill's Crossing. John's son, Lancaster, born in 1747, carried on the farm during the American Revolution. Lancaster's son, Lawrence, and his grandson, Lancaster O. Underhill, continued to live in the old homestead until it was sold in 1836.

Up on the high ground along the White Plains — Danbury Post Road, James Morgan settled and began farming around 1730. To the north of Morgan, across the present Tuckahoe line, the Ward family claimed land and built what would become a famous house.

FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

After all these pages, we finally have settlers living in our village area. We don't want to lose track of them now — but listen! The fifes and drums are sounding throughout the Colonies! The American Revolution is at hand. Let us see how the war affected the Underhills and other settlers nearby.

On the eve of Revolution, Westchester was the wealthiest county in New York Colony. Hard work had made farms and mills prosper. There were many rich landowners, happy with the life they had built. The feeling of independence was in them and they resented British oppression, but most resented even more the interruption of their lives by war.

As a result of this feeling, and the whims of warfare, much of Westchester was known as "neutral ground." There were ardent patriots in the county, called "Whigs," but far more ardent Royalists, called "Tories", who did not want to quit British rule. The majority of the farmers were in the middle, wishing only to be left alone to grow their crops. Their wish was not granted, as we shall see.

General Washington lost New York to the British in September, 1776. He held them off at the battle of Harlem Heights on September 16th, then retreated to White Plains. The British started to pursue him. One legend goes that the British War Office saw the Bronx River on the map and ordered the British Navy to sail up to White Plains. We know they did not succeed! However, the Bronx River did offer some



protection to Washington's right flank as he headed north.

After being beaten off at Throg's Neck in the Bronx, the British sailed up the Sound, landing troops at Pell's Point and New Rochelle. They were fought off by Colonel John Glover and a small force, long enough for Washington to retreat safely with our main army. The British were ashore, however, and remained in Westchester for the rest of the war. Saint Paul's church served for a time as a British hospital.

At White Plains, Washington held against the British attack. The Redcoats withdrew to lower Westchester, while American forces remained at North Castle and Peekskill. From then on the war in Westchester was largely between local patriot militia and Tory raiders. It was a bloody, unending struggle of looting, pillaging and burning. Neighbors fought neighbors and families were split. At the war's end, no other county in our young nation had suffered so much as ours. Westchester was devastated.

From the beginning, British officers recruited Westchester Tories for the "Refugee Corps" to help subdue the Americans.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

Among the more famous of these forces were "Rogers Rangers", "DeLancey's Refugees" and "Emmerick's Chasseurs". They rode at night on raids and on foraging missions to supply food for the British regulars. Since most of them were local people who attacked and robbed their former neighbors, they were roundly hated by all patriots.

On the American side, the militia of each town tried to keep order and defend against the raids. They made counter-raids and daring strikes behind enemy lines. One group of Westchester seamen used whaleboats to dart out and attack vessels supplying the British with food and firewood. Another colorful group were the "Westchester Guides", about nineteen men who knew every rock and valley of the county and scouted for the American troops.

Unfortunately, there was still another group which perhaps harmed our county more than the Tory raiders. These were the "cowboys" and "skinnners", lawless men including both Whigs and Tories, whose only purpose was to plunder and steal. They rode in small bands, driving neighbors from their homes, looting valuables and stealing livestock. Their name, "cowboy", came from their practice of rustling cattle, which they would sell to either side, depending on which paid the most.

Taken together, the actions of all these groups stripped most of the farms bare and impoverished the people. Many of the skirmishes and raids took place near Bronxville. Back to the Time Machine for a closer look.

SKIRMISHERS AND RAIDERS

A staunch American patriot was Stephen Ward, whose home, the stagecoach posthouse, stood at White Plains Road and Winter Hill, near the Bronxville-Tuckahoe boundary. Ward's house was the scene of many secret meetings held by local militia men. On the night of March 16, 1777, just such a gathering was taking place.

All that day a large party of patriot foragers had been scouring the Morrisania area for supplies to send up to Continental troops in Peekskill. Food was scarce after a cold

WESTCHESTER *in the* REVOLUTION

CONN.

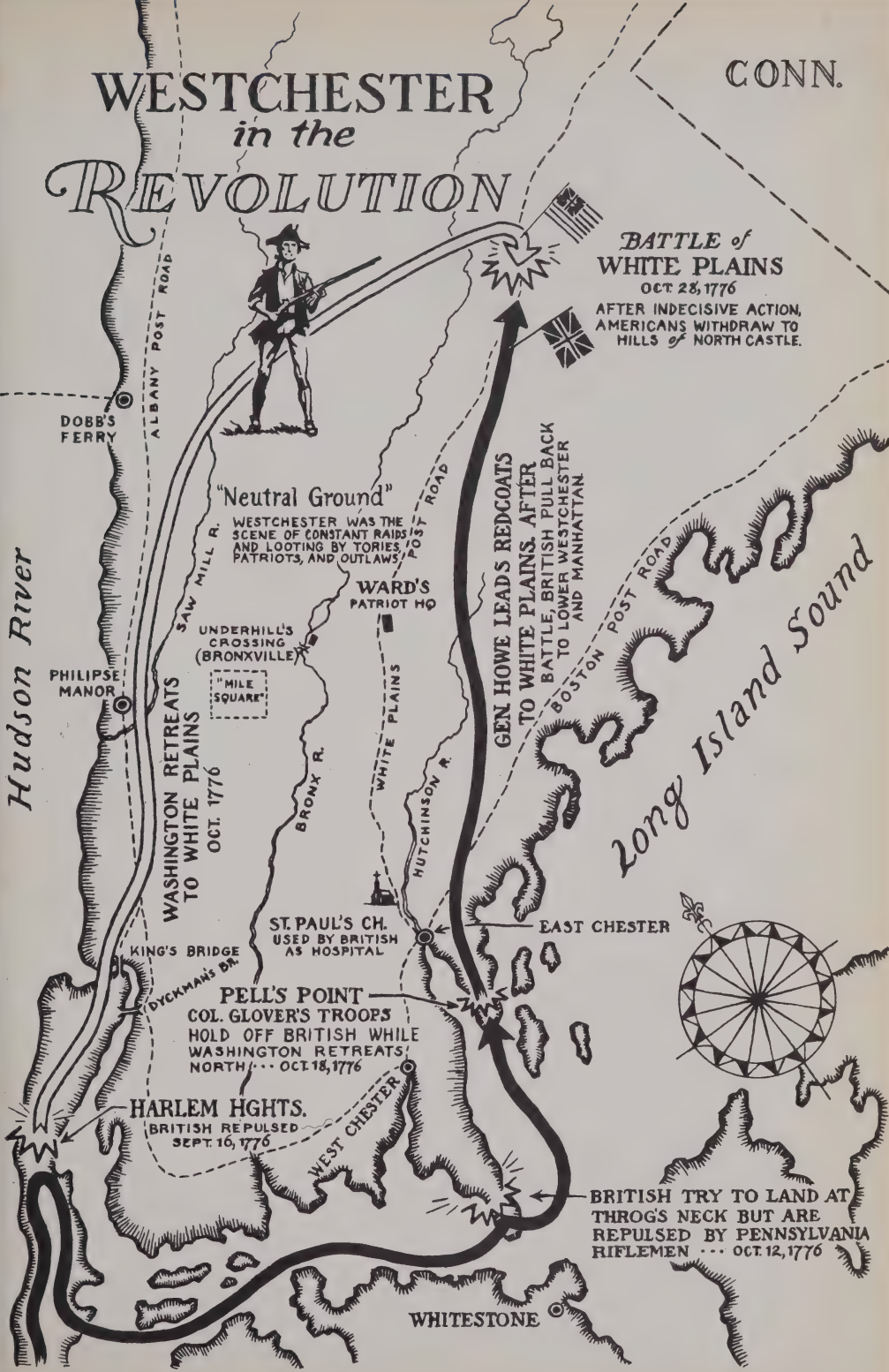
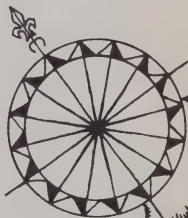
BATTLE of WHITE PLAINS OCT 28, 1776

AFTER INDECISIVE ACTION,
AMERICANS WITHDRAW TO
HILLS of NORTH CASTLE.

GEN HOWE LEADS REDCOATS
TO WHITE PLAINS. AFTER
BATTLE, BRITISH PULL BACK
TO LOWER WESTCHESTER
AND MANHATTAN

Hudson River

Long Island Sound



ALBANY POST ROAD

SAW MILL R.

BRONX R.

WHITE PLAINS

HUTCHINSON R.

BOSTON POST ROAD

DOBB'S FERRY

PHILIPSE MANOR

WASHINGTON RETREATS
TO WHITE PLAINS
OCT. 1776

KING'S BRIDGE
DYCKMAN'S BR.

"Neutral Ground"
WESTCHESTER WAS THE
SCENE OF CONSTANT RAIDS
AND LOOTING BY TORIES, TO
PATRIOTS, AND OUTLAWS.

UNDERHILL'S
CROSSING
(BRONXVILLE)

"MILE
SQUARE"

WARD'S
PATRIOT HQ

ST. PAUL'S CH.
USED BY BRITISH
AS HOSPITAL

EAST CHESTER

PELL'S POINT
COL. GLOVER'S TROOPS
HOLD OFF BRITISH WHILE
WASHINGTON RETREATS
NORTH... OCT. 18, 1776

HARLEM HIGHTS.
BRITISH REPULSED
SEPT. 16, 1776

WEST CHESTER

BRITISH TRY TO LAND AT
THROGS NECK BUT ARE
REPULSED BY PENNSYLVANIA
RIFLEMEN ... OCT. 12, 1776

WHITESTONE

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

winter, and demand for more supplies came south with almost every dispatch rider.

Covering the foragers and their wagons was one company of Dutchess County conscripts and a company of Westchester militia, led by Captain Sam Delevan. Sam's bright red coat brought jibes from his friends, but all in good fun, as no more patriotic American lived than Delevan.

During the day, the supply-hunters ran into British troops. Delevan engaged them, conducting a moving fire-fight near Williamsbridge. He succeeded in drawing the enemy clear of the foragers, and kept their attention piqued by occasional volleys from cover on the shore of the Bronx River.

Eventually the militia and foragers withdrew and headed north without pursuit. They reached White Plains Post Road and stopped for a breather at Ward's. Under cover of darkness, they felt secure. The positions of the regular British troops were ten miles to the south.

Their security was shortlived. In the blackness a strong force of Redcoats moved silently northward, led by Captain Campbell. Tory spies had been reporting that Ward's was a rebel hangout, and Campbell had orders to clear it out.

Circling the house, the British took up positions and opened fire. In the brief but fierce skirmish, Campbell was killed, as were a number of Americans. Patriots jumped from first and second floor windows, hit the ground running and attempted to break through the perimeter. Some were taken prisoner, to be herded aboard the dreaded prison hulks in New York harbor. A large number escaped the trap, however, and melted into the woods. Among them was Captain Sam Delevan. In the faint light from the house windows and flashing muskets, his red coat confused the British long enough for him to walk away.

Samuel Crawford of Scarsdale was not so fortunate. Crawford, a delegate to the Provincial Congress and a leader in the county Committee of Safety, had been identified as a fiery patriot by Tory rangers, and was bayonneted. He died on his way to the prison ships.

The Redcoats were not through with Ward's. It persisted as a hornet's nest of Yankee resistance after the 1777 attack.

WOLVES AND WITCHES

Finally, the British marched north to the house in November, 1778, removed clapboarding and other lumber for building barracks, and burned what was left.

After the Revolution, Stephen's son, Jonathan, built a new house on the spot, following the same plans. Even some of the early interior features were salvaged from the original ruins. Ward's continued as a stage stop, post office, and inn. In the heyday of Tuckahoe quarry operations, it was called "Marble Hall," and President Van Buren was entertained there. Later it became a private residence, and today it has been renovated and is part of Concordia College. A plaque marking the site of the skirmish and the loss of patriot Sam Crawford is located at the junction of White Plains Road and Winter Hill Road.

The war years were not any kinder to Lancaster Underhill than they had been to Ward. Down in the valley, Underhill spent many a long night hiding beneath his ox cart, covered with hay, while Tories and "cowboy" raiders rode abroad. One report states that he was actually hanged by his thumbs to an apple tree in his orchard, but miraculously, his farm was not burned. Lancaster reportedly lived to a ripe old age of 98.

Part III
THE COUNTRY SQUIRES
1788-1865



REBUILDING

Lancaster Underhill's adventures and the fight at Ward's Tavern were typical of many raids and battles happening throughout Westchester from 1776 to 1787. When Washington returned to New York in triumph in 1787 his escort was a troop of Westchester cavalry commanded by the same Captain Sam Delevan who had escaped from Ward's.

Even after the British went home, the "cowboys" still plagued the county for a time, until eight companies of infantry quelled them. Then the citizens began to pick up the pieces and rebuild. Recovery was slow.

Land held by the Tories was seized by the State and sold. The most important of this land was the large Philipse Manor along the Hudson. Most of the active Tories were banished from the county. Many went to Canada or England.



The Clermont



18th Century Morgan Homestead, located junction of New Rochelle Road and White Plains Road.

Gradually, the farms began producing again. With them grew small industries, such as iron foundries, brickworks, shoe factories and weaving mills. Silver, copper and marble were mined at Sing Sing. Iron was mined at Port Chester and Peekskill.

In our village, Lancaster Underhill was running his mills on the Bronx River and tending his farm and orchard.

More and more boats sailed the Hudson and the Sound, carrying Westchester goods to New York. In 1807 the first steamboat, Fulton's *Clermont*, puffed past Yonkers and a new era of shipping was born.

Westchester's population grew from 11,000 in 1750 to 24,000 in 1790. The town of Eastchester, which included the area of Bronxville, had 740 people in 1790.

Roads were repaired and new ones built. The New York-Albany Stagecoach started in 1785, along the Albany Post Road. By 1787 the New York-Boston stage ran three times a week in the summer. When Lancaster Underhill wanted to send a letter, he took it to Ward's Tavern, which served as the post office for all of northern Eastchester. A mail stage ran every other day between New York and White Plains, Bedford and Danbury, Connecticut.

In 1812 America went to war with England again. The war caused great alarm in Westchester for fear the British would land here.

Militia companies were called out to defend the coastal areas. One such company mustered at the house of Ensign Abijah Morgan, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arad Riggs, on the northeast corner of White Plains Road and New Rochelle Road. The British did send a shore party in to steal some sixty sheep at Mamaroneck but never landed in force.

The years following the war were important ones for our village. In nearby Tuckahoe, marble veins were discovered and quarrying operations were started. This industry soon was to bring to Bronxville one of its most dynamic citizens.

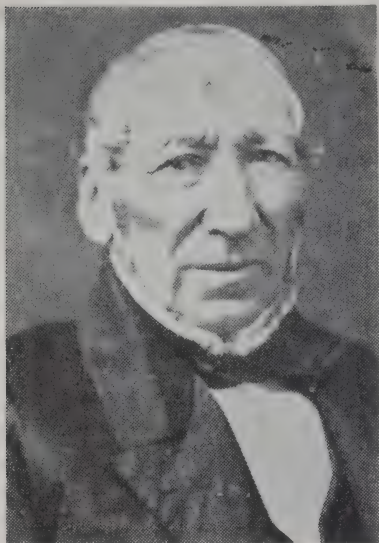
ALEXANDER MASTERTON

A rugged Scotch lad of eighteen swung ashore from his ship at New York in 1815. Alexander Masterton had arrived in America to make his fortune. Born in Forfar, Scotland in 1797, young Alexander had left home at seventeen, delaying en route at Halifax, Nova Scotia, until England and America had ended the War of 1812.

He took lodgings on Broome Street in New York. By 1818 he had organized the firm of Masterton and Smith, architect-builders.

During the War of 1812 the British had destroyed much of our capitol at Washington. Marble was needed to rebuild. Masterton and Smith, anxious to get government building contracts, scouted around for high-grade marble deposits. In 1832 they found them in Tuckahoe and purchased quarries. Carv-

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE



Alexander Masterton and wife



Masterton Homestead on White Plains Road, built 1835

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

ing shops were built beside the quarries to cut and shape the stone.

Alexander, who had married Euphemia Morison during this period, began "commuting" between Broome Street and Tuckahoe. In those days it was a long, tiring trip by stage coach and took valuable time from business and family life.

The obvious thing to do was to move near the quarries.

In 1835 the Mastertons bought eleven acres of the Morgan property on the east side of White Plains Road, and built their home. At first they were planning to live here for three years only, but the longer they stayed the more they enjoyed country life. They never left. Alexander Masterton's homestead still stands at 90 White Plains Road.

The Masterton property was increased to one hundred acres over the years. Of the six Masterton children, Joseph and William died at early ages. Alexander Jr., Robert and John grew up to become prominent business men in New York and leaders of our community. The sixth child, Mary Morison Masterton, inherited the family homestead.

Farther on we will see how the Masterton family descendants continued to help Bronxville grow. They have always been a fresh and vital force in our village.

TUCKAHOE MARBLE

The marble quarries at Tuckahoe were famous in their day and helped to speed the settlement of our part of Westchester. They were located north and west of Main Street in Tuckahoe, behind the Waverly School. The pits are still visible.

Switch back the Time Machine to a summer morning in 1838. White marble dust rises in clouds above the quarries as sweating drillers and sawyers labor to cut out great blocks from the veins. Oxen, hitched to tackles, haul the slabs up to workshops where designers and carvers shape the marble into perfect blocks of required size, or carve it into beautiful fluted columns.

Down the road into the pit rode a powerful man astride a black horse. Unmindful of the dust, he reined to a halt beside the laborers, his shrewd eyes surveying the work.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE



"Morning, Mr. Masterton," chimed several of the men, resting briefly on their tools.

"Hullo, lads. How are ye coming?"

"Should have this section cut today, sir," said the foreman.

"Aye, that's the spirit. We all must put our shoulders to the job. They are anxious for the stone in Washington." The

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

owner paused to mop the dust from his brow. "Well, lads, dinna let me keep ye from work."

Alexander rode off to the office building to begin his daily paper work. Near the workshops, finished marble was being loaded on a huge wagon. Another wagon, pulled by twenty yoke of oxen, was underway, wheels groaning beneath the heavy burden. Drivers walked beside the animals, shouting commands and applying sticks to urge the balky ones along.

Down White Plains Road, the caravans plodded — past Ward's Tavern — past the Masterton home where young Alexander waved — past the churchyard at Saint Paul's in Mount Vernon — on to the shore of Eastchester Bay. Here the marble was loaded aboard schooners like the *Charming Sally* and *Miller's Damsel*, and carried by sea to its destination, or to the rail freight terminals in New York. Later, horses and mules replaced the ox teams, and by the middle of the 1800's the railroad was transporting the marble.

Fine Tuckahoe marble went into many well-known buildings, including the Naval Observatory, the interior walls of the Washington Monument, the Library of Congress and the General Post Office in Washington, D. C., the State Capitol in Albany, the Sub-Treasury and part of Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York, the New Orleans custom house, and many private residences.

The quarries gave work to many immigrants, newly arrived in our land. Descendants of the marble workers still live in Tuckahoe and Eastchester. Large quarry operations ended in 1907 but the many buildings and monuments of Tuckahoe marble will lend beauty to our nation for ages to come.

MORE SETTLERS FOR "UNDERHILL'S CROSSING"

In the early 1800s we had living in our village only a handful of residents, including the Underhills, Morgans and Mastertons. The Pirnies came and built "Sunny Brae", a lovely mansion off White Plains Road, and near them moved the Hunts. North of the Mastertons, another Underhill (distantly related to the earlier settler) purchased a Morgan house at

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

182 White Plains Road. Underhill's Crossing, as Bronxville was then known, still was virtually a wilderness except for Lancaster's valley farm and the neat lots and gardens of the houses. The hills were covered with their original forests. The lowest part of the valley, where the school football field is today, was a swamp with a pond in the middle. This pond grew large when melting snow and rains drained down from the hills, often swelling over the valley to a depth of twelve or more feet in spots. After a dry summer, it shrank to "puddle" size, although the whole area remained spongy and dangerous to walk through because of quicksand. According to legend, a cow once was sucked beneath the surface. Some old-timers say it was a horse, and one source swears it was a horse and buggy! This place was called the Pond Field. Later, the name of the main street was changed from Underhill Road to Pondfield Road.

A creek ran down from Tuckahoe, filled the pond, then ambled on beneath a bridge on Pondfield Road, through the present Bolton Gardens, and emptied into the Bronx River. The junction of creek and river was a favorite fishing hole. The tributary stream was augmented by a crystal spring bubbling up near the foot of Tanglewylde. In later years this pure water was bottled under the label of Gramatan Springs. The springhouse still stands over the source.

In 1836, an Episcopal minister, Robert Bolton, arrived in America from England with his wife and thirteen children. Obviously needing room, they journeyed out from New York and bought the Underhill farmhouse and adjoining land. They called it Brook Farm, and the children loved it. When they weren't busy with daily chores, the young Boltons explored the woods and shores of the Bronx River, made insect collections, and edited a family newspaper.

Reverend Bolton was rector of old Saint Paul's in Mount Vernon. Later the family moved to Pelham and built Bolton Priory. Before leaving town, the Boltons gave the land for the First Reformed Church — land which the present church still occupies. They also made the fill for the first railroad track, building up the roadbed in the section between the Midland Avenue crossing and the present station.

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES



The Reverend C. Winter Bolton

The Boltons gave much of themselves to our early settlement. They were a cultured, intelligent family. The Reverend Robert Bolton, Jr., wrote "The History of the County of Westchester" in 1848. A second edition was edited by his brother, Reverend Cornelius Winter Bolton.

In 1840, a successful New York ship-chandler, James P. Swain, visited this area and liked what he saw. From Lancaster Underhill he purchased a large tract of land on the north, including both shores of the Bronx River. Six years later he converted Lancaster's old mills on the Bronx River into "Swain's Cutlery Factory." In 1847 ground was broken for his home, a stone and timbered mansion called "Stoneleigh". Completed in 1849, this home stood where the central drive leads into Alger Court today. The mansion was surrounded by beautiful lawns, greenhouses and pergolas overlooking the beaver pond of Indian times.



Old Mill on Bronx River at Pondfield Road West.
At the time depicted it housed the cutlery factory of James Swain.

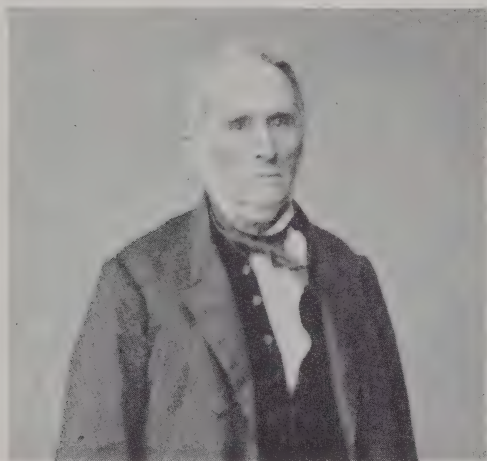


"Stoneleigh", the mansion of James Swain which later became the
first Alger Court Apartment Building.

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

Apparently, James Swain praised the pleasures of country living to his business partner and father-in-law, James Minot Prescott. In 1850 the Prescotts came to Underhill's Crossing and purchased eighty-six acres from Lancaster Underhill. This land included what today is Lawrence Park — extending roughly between Sagamore Road, Pondfield Road and Midland Avenue. The Prescotts lived at the Bolton's "Brook Farm" until their home, the stone "Manor House," was completed. It still stands on Prescott Avenue in Lawrence Park.

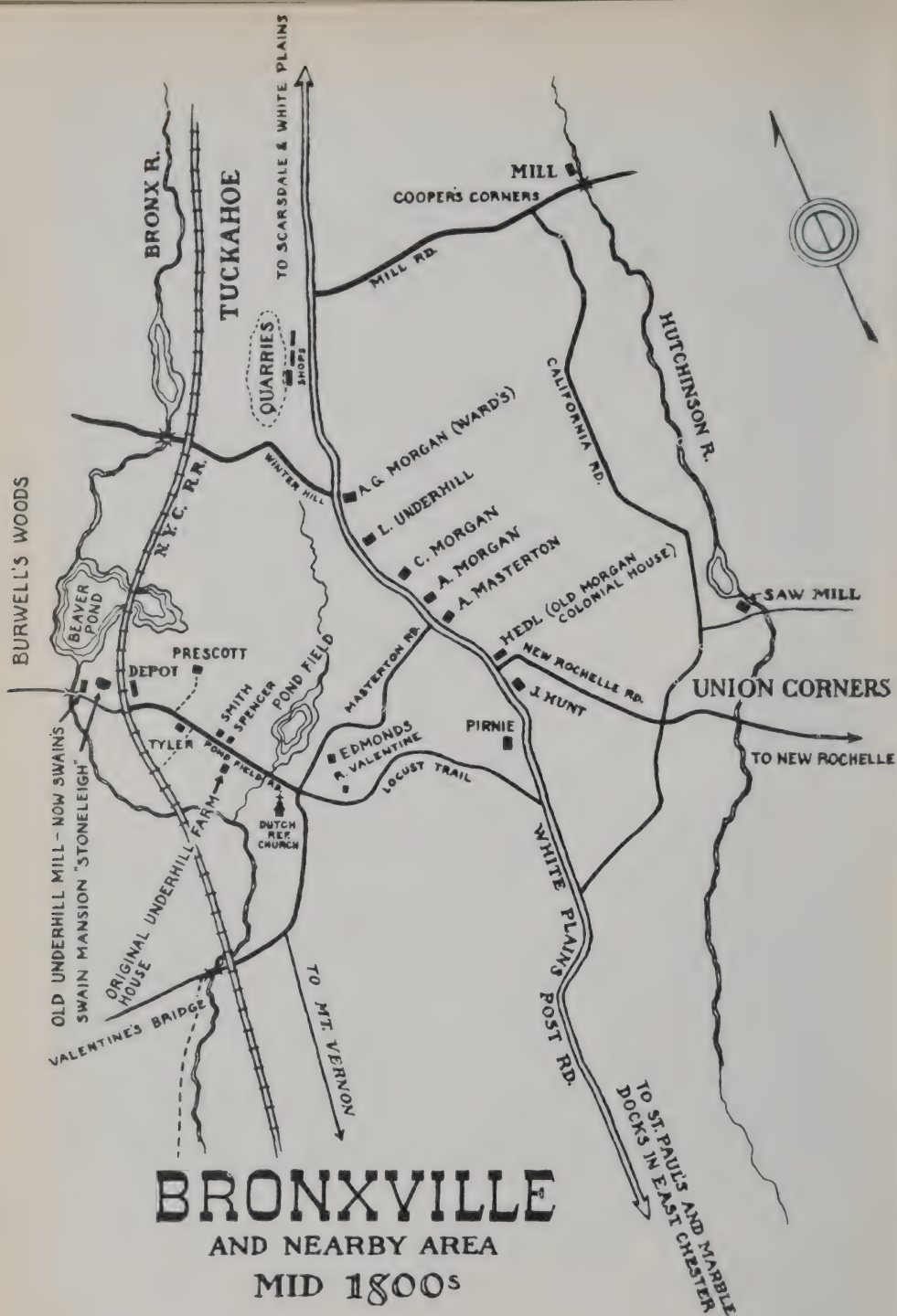
Meanwhile, Alfred Ebenezer Smith, great-grandson of Revolutionary War hero Ebenezer Smith, had come to the



James Minot Prescott

settlement in 1843. Across from the Swain mills he built an axle factory. His home stood on the corner of Pondfield and Tanglewylde. "Axle", as Mr. Smith was known, married Julia Morgan, daughter of Charles Morgan of White Plains Road. Later, in 1855, "Axle" Smith's brother, Dr. David Smith, married James Swain's daughter, Mary Araminta. David became our town's first doctor. His early home was in the area along the present Parkway Road.

In 1845 William and Edward DeWitt bought more of Underhill's land, between today's Elm Rock Road and Pondfield Road. William DeWitt built a home several years later, which still stands at 22 Elm Rock Road. Later, relatives of



THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

the DeWitts, the Willet Seamans, occupied this home.

In 1850 came Francis Edmonds, a New York financier and artist. He built the famous "Crow's Nest" mansion, which towers today among the trees at 50 Crow's Nest Road.

And so, by the mid 1800's, Underhill's Crossing had grown considerably. It is interesting that almost from the beginning, our village was shaped in its present character: that of a residential suburb. True, there were the mills and farms, but many of these were owned by successful merchants like Mr. Swain and Mr. Prescott, whom we would call "gentlemen farmers" today. Most of the early homes were country estates of New York businessmen.

One important event in the 1840's helped to make our community more attractive to these early settlers and for later settlers down to the present. The railroad from New York came through Underhill's Crossing.

In 1831 several businessmen in New York organized the New York and Harlem Railroad, to run between City Hall and the Harlem River. When it was completed the "railroad" consisted of a single car pulled by two horses. However, the steam engine was being perfected and by 1837 the line converted to steam power.

1842 saw the rails bridge the Harlem. By 1844 the track was laid all the way to White Plains. Imagine the excitement when the first train rolled through! Set the Time Machine for 1844 and focus on the crossing at Pondfield Road.

THE IRON HORSE

People had started gathering early on that summer morning. Lancaster O. Underhill, grandson of the first valley settler, leaned his lanky frame against a tree beside his new house and chatted with several farmhands who lounged on the porch and sat beside the dirt street. There was an undercurrent of excitement in the conversation. Periodically, each man glanced at the iron rails crossing Pondfield Road. Today was the great day.

"When you reckon she'll be through, Lank?" a young man asked.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

Underhill shook his head. "Don't know for certain, Ben. I figure sometime this morning."

"Four to one she won't be in 'til noon," wagered a farmer. "There'll be dig-nee-taries aboard, don't forget. Those swells don't wake up afore nine o'clock!" He winked at the group and bit off a chunk of plug tobacco.

The sun lifted above the steep hill near the house. The early dew evaporated from the grass and the day grew hot. Presently a farm wagon creaked down the road in a cloud of dust and joined the other teams lined up at Underhill's. The driver jumped down, grinning.

"Never seen such a pack o' loafers all in one place," he chided.

"Work will wait, Jack. It isn't every day you see a steam engine." Lancaster nodded importantly. "Look—here comes Mister Masterton! Guess *he* doesn't mind missing work for this."

An open carriage pulled up at the crossing. Out climbed Alexander Masterton, his wife Euphemia, and two of their children, Mary and young John. The coachman placed folding chairs beneath a tree for Mrs. Masterton and Mary, who put up parasols against the strong sun. Mr. Masterton tipped his hat at the men and joined them in conversation. In a short while they were joined by "Axle" Smith, riding across the tracks from his new factory. Behind him came a group of workers from the mills.

Alexander Masterton pulled out his watch and glanced at it impatiently. He was not a man for wasting time waiting, even for the first train along the new track.

A hubbub sounded along the railroad to the south. Figures of various sizes could be seen running and skipping through the heat shimmer rising from the roadbed.

"It's coming — it's coming!" yelled the leading figure, one of the Morgan boys. Following him were several other youths.

"We saw — smoke — down the — line!" puffed the boy breathlessly as he came to a halt at the crossing.

Everyone moved toward the track expectantly, gazing southward.

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"Now, children — stay back," warned Mr. Smith, motioning Will Morgan and John Masterton away from the roadbed where each was striving to be the first to spy the wonderful sight.

"See any smoke, Lancaster?"

"Nope. The children let their imaginations — yes, by hickory, there it is!"

A dim billow of smoke was visible through the haze. Everyone commented excitedly, watching it grow larger.

"Please stand back — everybody!" Mr. Smith warned earnestly. "These machines are dangerous. Watch out for sparks!"

The crowd unwillingly edged back. A hush spread over them. Very faintly, a huffing, hissing noise could be heard, growing steadily in volume. Sunlight sparkled on bright metal moving up the track.



PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

"Here she is, folks!" someone yelled. "Look at her come!"

Bearing down on them came a roaring monster of iron and brass. From its flaring stack spouted dense clouds of smoke and sparks. Steam hissed from cylinders, rods flashed and clanked, wheels churned mightily. On the front, an American flag with twenty-six stars whipped from a short staff.

At the rear of the boiler, the fireman stooped and hurled more wood into the fire-box, while the engineer grinned through a mask of soot, one hand on the throttle, the other yanking the bell rope.

Behind the engine rolled the wood-car and behind that clattered several short wooden coaches, windows open, red-white-and-blue bunting fluttering along the sides.

Inside, the spectators could see the "dignitaries" — railroad officials and leading figures of New York and Westchester, together with newspapermen — smiling, waving, and brushing off sparks and soot.

Trailing smoke, embers and steam, the train thundered past Underhill's Crossing at the breathtaking speed of fifteen miles per hour.

"Jehosophat!" shouted a spellbound farmhand, "ain't she grand, though?"

The wide eyes of the onlookers reflected his sentiments. Blinking from the dust and smoke, they watched the last car round the bend.

"Well, and that's that." Alexander Masterton commented. "We must arrange to have the trains stop here. It will be a fine convenience. All right, my dear." He handed his wife and children into the carriage, climbed up himself and told the coachman to drive home.

The crowd slowly dispersed, the older men recounting what they had seen, the boys solemnly vowing to become engineers, and the girls sad because they never could be.

OUR VILLAGE BECOMES "BRONXVILLE"

The coming of the railroad caused changes in our village. Although trains did not stop at Underhill's Crossing until

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

1848, and then only fitfully for some years, Alexander Masterton decided he should have access to the crossing. At that time, Underhill (Pondfield) Road went just past the present Town Hall, then turned along today's Gramatan Avenue toward Monticello (later Mount Vernon). The only access to White Plains Road was via "Locust Trail," a rough, narrow route now called Locust Lane.

Using oxen from the quarries, Alexander Masterton had a road cleared through his woods from White Plains Road down to Pondfield. Today, the upper part of this road we call Elm Rock, the lower part Masterton, and the connection to Pondfield is now part of Midland Avenue.

When trains began stopping at Underhill's Crossing, the problem of traveling to New York ceased to be so bothersome. The stagecoach run to the city took several hours. The early trains reduced the time to an hour and a half, and a few years later, to an hour. This connection with the city attracted many of the town's mid-century settlers.

Lancaster Underhill became the first stationmaster, ticket and freight agent. His home, which stood where the office building is today, at the foot of Sagamore, became the station. The front parlor was converted into a ticket office and waiting room, and an extension to the porch provided extra outdoor shelter for passengers.

Shortly after Lancaster became stationmaster, our village acquired its own post office. For a long time mail for this area had been dispatched and delivered at the old Ward Stagecoach Tavern in Tuckahoe. The official title of the Ward post office was "Bronx" and later, "Bronx River."

In 1847 the post office was moved from Ward's to a building in Tuckahoe, nearer to the railroad. The post office was renamed "Tuckahoe". Settlers here were not happy with this arrangement and agitated for a separate office. In 1852 their wish was granted. President Millard Fillmore appointed Lancaster Underhill as the town's first postmaster. The post office was located in a stall built onto the front of Lancaster's house. If a resident peered through the stall window and saw a letter in his pigeonhole, he knocked on Lancaster's door. Whether or not he got his mail often depended upon Lancaster's disposition that day.



Lancaster Underhill, first Village stationmaster and postmaster, and grandson of the first Colonial settler in the heart of Bronxville.

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

At a point in mid-century, possibly when the post office was set up, sentiment arose to change the settlement's name from Underhill's Crossing to something shorter. Many people felt it should be named for James Swain, since his mansion, farm and mills had contributed to the growth of the northwest end of town. Mr. Swain modestly refused and suggested "Bronxville" as a substitute. The name gained acceptance gradually, and by the Civil War period, the village was officially "Bronxville."

Lancaster Underhill served as stationmaster for many years, and except for the year 1861, he served an unbroken term as postmaster, from 1852 until he retired in 1896. He died in 1898, just shy of his ninetieth birthday. His house at the crossing was the center for village visiting, news and



Lancaster Underhill's home at the foot of Sagamore: depot, post office, store and Village news center.

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gossip. Everyone came there for mail, freight shipments, railroad tickets, weather reports, and almost anything else one might need, including groceries.

The Underhills, from the eighteenth century settlers down through Lancaster, were true pioneers of Bronxville. They span some one hundred and fifty years of our village history.

THE SECOND GENERATION OF MASTERTONS

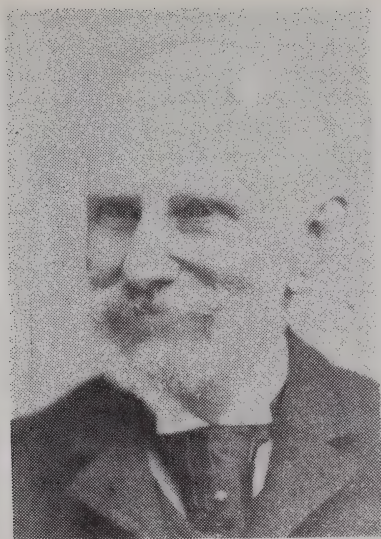
After the Masterton boys finished their education, they began their careers in New York. Robert was a merchant. Alexander Jr., and John became bankers. John later served as Supervisor of Eastchester.

Robert married Avis Legget Seaman in 1845. In 1852 they moved to Bronxville on fourteen rented acres south of the family homestead, along White Plains Road. The land was purchased in 1857 and they lived in the old colonial Morgan house on the northeast corner of White Plains and New Rochelle Roads. In 1863 Robert built a stone mansion on Fordal Road which was demolished in 1957.

Alexander, Jr., married Mary Augusta Hance in 1851. Early in the 1860's, they moved into Forfar Cottage, a handsome mansion built by his father on eleven acres of land fronting on Masterton Road. Forfar, named for Alexander Senior's birthplace in Scotland, burned down in 1879 but was rebuilt and stands today, considerably altered, at 15 Hemlock Road.

John married Josephine Augusta Mead. He built his first home on ten acres of land fronting on Elm Rock Road. This house no longer stands, but later, in 1870, John built the large mansion "Oakledge," still located off Pondfield Road on Oakledge Drive.

Mary Morison Masterton married Elias Dusenberry, member of an old Dutch family from Colonial Heights, in 1856. When her father died in 1859, Mary inherited the homestead where she lived with her husband and children. Elias Dusenberry was a successful lawyer in New York and became Supervisor of Eastchester in 1873.



Alexander Masterton Jr.



John M. Masterton



Robert M. Masterton

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Mary's cousin, Catherine, traveled over from Scotland to live with the Mastertons. She survived a shipwreck during the crossing, and grew up in the Masterton homestead. Catherine married an artist named Welbasky and was one of the founders of the Bronxville Reformed Church. Welbasky died and Catherine later married George Swain, nephew of James Swain.

THE FIRST CHURCH

In the 1840's several of Bronxville's families traveled on Sundays to Greenville, near Scarsdale, to worship at the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1848 Alexander Masterton decided that this community needed its own house of worship. Working with James Prescott and James Swain, he obtained permission from the Reformed Church Classis of New York to build a church. Abel T. Stewart, minister of the Greenville church, agreed to come down and conduct services in Bronxville after completing his morning service at his own church.

On the land donated by the Boltons, Bronxville's first church was completed in 1850. It was a simple frame building which stood until 1926, when the present Reformed Church was built. The charter membership was twelve, and their names may be seen on a marble tablet in the vestibule of today's church.

James Swain and James Prescott became the first elders of the new church. Alexander Masterton, Jr. and Edward Hunt were chosen as deacons. Mr. Prescott was named Bible School superintendent, and he supervised the religious education of the children until 1874, when Alexander Masterton, Jr. succeeded him.

Early church services were very simple. Mr. Prescott was puritanical in his creed and abhorred the thought of music in the meeting house. Hymn singing began with the sounding of a tuning fork, while Mr. Prescott scowled in silence. Fortunately, he had a keen sense of humor which endeared him to all, despite his strict beliefs.



**The First Dutch Reformed Church
seen from the Midland Avenue side.**

Later, in 1864, Alexander Masterton Jr. presented an organ to the church, over James Prescott's protests. Alexander's daughter, Louise, was instructed in its use. When it was felt that she had mastered it, she went to church one Sunday morning for her musical debut.

Turn back the Time Machine to a warm Sunday in 1864.

THAT OLD TIME RELIGION

Louise Masterton was fourteen, with her blonde hair plaited in long braids. Wearing a full plaid skirt, white blouse and a floppy leghorn hat wreathed in flowers, she nervously climbed to the choir loft and took her seat before the double bank of keys.

There were boys in the loft too — boys whose Sunday suits and slicked hair didn't offset mischievous glints in their eyes. One lad held something behind his back, but Louise was too anxious about the organ to notice.

The Reverend Washington Roosevelt, minister of the church at that time, took his place before the congregation.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE



He looked up and nodded at Louise. Taking a deep breath, the girl began the opening hymn. It went fairly well, and she played the "amen" with relief.

The service began. Washington Roosevelt prayed. Louise bowed her head. Suddenly a boy's hand snaked across and pressed something into her palm. She opened her eyes to see a rather limp turtle. With a sniff she placed it on the floor. Now it was Offertory time. Music ready, Louise struck the opening chords. Playing with vigor, if not masterfully, she leaned forward to reach a high note. Her head jerked back hard, and her hand faltered on the keys. Someone had tied her braids to the back of the chair!

Considerably hampered, Louise stumbled through the rest of the piece. Then, eyes blazing at the boys, she managed to get loose.

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"You did that!" hissed Louise, pointing an accusing finger at the young Swain boy, who smiled back in wide-eyed innocence.

Just then, a deep voice rose from the congregation below. Mr. Prescott stood up and began an oration against organ music within the sacred confines of the church. Warming to his subject, he gave notice that the organ was, in reality, a secret weapon of the devil, smuggled in to lure the churchfolk along paths of sin and degradation.

"James, sit down!" Mrs. Prescott whispered, frowning and tugging at her husband's coat-tails.

Other members of the congregation fixed cool stares upon the speaker, to no avail. It took the Reverend Roosevelt to restore order. He stood and raised his hand for the benediction.

Mr. Prescott sat down. When the minister concluded, Louise felt she should play a recessional, but had nothing prepared. Resolutely, she began a stately, slow selection, familiar but not recognized by the parish as they filed out. Then she made a face at the boys and flounced down the stairs to the vestibule.

"Louise," said her waiting father, "What was that last tune you played?"

"Oh — just something that seemed appropriate, Papa," Louise smiled.

"It was very soft and slow" Alexander mused. "Strange, but it did sound a little like 'Johnny, Get Your Gun.'"

Louise winked at her father and they walked arm-in-arm to their waiting buggy.

ROBBERS ROOST

Not all services at the Reformed Church were as militant and full of fireworks as that one, but strong, forthright men made up the membership and opinions were expressed freely. The organ remained, as did the friendship of Prescott and Masterton. The small church struggled through the years, occasionally without a pastor, but it survived to become Bronxville's largest, with a membership in 1961 of 2,959.

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Skipping ahead briefly, the Reformed Church sheltered not only the holy but the unholy as well, at one point in its career. During 1872, the first year of the Reverend Alfred Myers' ministry, Bronxville had a rash of small burglaries. Even the church was robbed of its carpet and several valuable sacramental ornaments.

On Sundays, members of the congregation often commented that they smelled coffee boiling during the service. There was no evident explanation for the aroma, and the matter was forgotten.

In 1875 Alexander Masterton, Jr., gave funds for a Sunday school addition in memory of his son who died at age seven. When carpenters opened the gable of the church roof to connect the addition, they discovered beneath the rafters a small stove, cooking utensils and a set of burglar's tools.

The church attic had been the roost of the robber, who evidently had made his Sunday morning coffee while the congregation worshipped below. The robber had a sense of humor. Some time later, the stolen church carpet was found in the barn of that staunch puritan, James Prescott.

THE CIVIL WAR: 1861 - 1865

The tragic war between the states caused excitement and concern in our town, as it did throughout the nation. Enlistment records are confused and incomplete for much of Westchester, so we are not certain of all the names of Bronxville soldiers.

But recruiting drums were beating in Eastchester and Yonkers. Eastchester formed a company under Captain Abijah Morgan and Lieutenant Thomas Oakley. Two famous regiments composed largely of Westchester men were the 6th New York Heavy Artillery and the 17th Infantry — the "Westchester Chasseurs."

The ladies of Bronxville formed a sewing group which traveled in coaches to the Armory in Yonkers and made ban-

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

dages for the wounded. Many of Bronxville's men belonged to a group called the "Men's Neighbors Club" which met several times a month at the various homes to discuss current events, agriculture, and other subjects. The Neighbors' Club supported the ladies' patriotic activities. In April, 1863, the Club paid tribute to a member, Lt. Joseph N. Mead, who died of an illness at his regimental camp in Virginia.

In the early war years, the Union armies suffered many defeats by the Confederates, under their fine general, Robert E. Lee. Enlistments were not enough to offset the casualties, and a draft of new recruits was necessary. We are accustomed to conscription today but in those times it was very unpopular among many less patriotic citizens.

The first draft selection was set for July 13, 1863. In New York City, angry mobs of immigrants, laborers, and rowdies stormed the draft office, and swept through the streets, burning, murdering and looting. The mob grew to fearsome proportions, overwhelming police and the handful of troops available. Special targets of the crazed toughs were negroes,



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whom they stupidly blamed for causing the war and the drafts.

On July 14, smoke from many fires hung above New York, and the riots spread to Westchester. Tracks of the New York and Harlem Railroad were pulled up in the Bronx and general attacks on the railroads were planned.

Close to Bronxville, a mob of immigrant quarry workers in Tuckahoe grabbed sticks, stones and whatever weapons they found and swarmed down toward our village, looking for trouble. Turn the Time Dial back to July 13, 1863.

THE GATE AT SWAIN'S

At the Prescott-Swain chandlery on the New York waterfront, James Swain stared from his office window at the street below. Groups of angry men were milling at the corner, listening to a bearded, evil-looking speaker who was evidently urging them to mischief. The sound of his shrill voice reached the window, but Swain could not catch the words.

"Mr. Swain!" The door behind him burst open and an agitated clerk burst in. "Mr. Swain, the city has gone to the devil! Mobs are everywhere — burning, breaking in — they've hanged some negroes!"

"Where are the police?"

"They are fighting them, sir, but there are too many for them. I fear the ruffians will break in here any minute, Mr. Swain — we'd best close up and get out while we still have our skins."

James Swain nodded, and put on his coat. "Listen, Taylor. Have the two storeroom boys lie in the bottom of one of the wagons. Cover them with canvas, hitch up and drive straight for my home. Don't stop for anyone!"

The storeroom clerks were negroes. Swain knew their lives were in danger as long as they stayed in the city. He saw them off, hidden in the wagon, then climbed into his own carriage, placing a pocket pistol in his coat.

The horses flew through the city streets. At several points their way was blocked by the mob, and they careened into side streets to avoid them. Three hours later, James Swain reached

THE COUNTRY SQUIRES

his home. Taylor, with the wagon, arrived soon after, his shirt wet from perspiration in the sultry July heat.

"Take them into Burwell's Woods and hide them," ordered Swain. "I'll have my family fix some food for them."

Taylor drove across the bridge by the mills and up into the woods. The two negroes now sat beside him, as they considered the danger was past. They were wrong.

That night in the woods went peacefully. Mrs. Swain herself, guided by Taylor, took a warm supper and some blankets to the men. The next morning, a breakfast was sent. The negroes had slept well and were grateful for their salvation.

Another hot day settled over the village. All morning long, residents gathered at Lancaster Underhill's, anxious for news from the city, although the trains were not running. The crowd melted away at noon and went home for dinner.

About mid-afternoon, Lancaster looked out to see a large gang of men streaming down the Pondfield Road, half-hidden in the dust they raised. As they drew near, Underhill saw that they were workers from the Tuckahoe quarries. Sullen and mean-looking, many carried clubs and knives.

The stationmaster walked to the crossing and faced the crowd. "What is it you're after, lads? We want no trouble here!"

"Out of the way, bucko, or we'll trample ye!" threatened a burly Irishman in the front ranks. "It's him we want!" he growled, pointed to Swain's mansion. "Him and the negroes! Come on, me bully boys!"

The mob swept by Underhill, who was powerless to stop them. Somehow, the news of Swain's negroes had been passed along the rioter's grapevine, either from New York or by someone locally.

Before James Swain's driveway, now the entrance to Alger Court, the rioters milled. At the gate stood one of Swain's men, Terrance Ryan.

"Hang Swain! Burn the negroes!" shouted the mob, needing only a spark to send them murderously across the lawn toward the house.



Ryan stood unarmed, legs widespread, fists doubled.

"Listen, all of ye!" he said, not shouting, but firm-voiced so all could hear. "Mr. Swain has been me friend ever since I came here. Ye'll not go through this gate unless it's over the dead body of Terry Ryan!"

The crowd swayed, muttering. Looks were exchanged among the leaders, but no one moved forward. The bravery of their own countryman took the fire out of them.

They shuffled in the dusty road, then turned and retreated sheepishly. Some tipped their hats to Dr. David Smith, Swain's son-in-law, who stood on the stone wall before the mansion, ready to resist the assault that never came.

Later, the quarrymen marched down White Plains Road to Mount Vernon, threatening to burn the houses of Republicans. Several prominent Democrats talked them out of it. Some windows were broken, and wild shots were fired, but the mob finally gave up and went home.

In New York, however, it took several days of heroic police work and the landing of Federal troops before the horrible riot was quelled.

Part IV
PRANKS AND PRIMERS
1835-1887



OLD SCHOOL DAYS

It is high time that we catch up with schools in our community, in case you are beginning to think children played permanent hookey in the good old days. Let us go back and see how the schools came to Bronxville.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

The first schools in Bronxville proper were private. In the early 1850's, Otis R. Brown opened a school in the upstairs rooms of his home on Swain Street (Pondfield Road West), opposite James Swain's mansion. Mr. Brown had the distinction of being able to write with both hands at the same time. Later Miss Lucia Hale took over as teacher.

In 1853 Miss Martha Prescott Lyman, Bronxville's first woman college graduate, opened a private school in a little wooden building behind the Reformed Church. Village Fathers sponsoring the school were Alexander Masterton, Francis Edmonds, James Prescott, and James Swain. The number of pupils was limited to 28, each paying a tuition of five dollars per quarter. In 1858 Miss Lyman and her father bought the old Underhill farmhouse from the Boltons, and classes were held in the two front rooms.

Louise Masterton, Alexander Jr.'s daughter, and Gulielma Masterton, Robert's daughter, both attended Miss Lyman's school, along with other students from Bronxville, Yonkers, Scarsdale and Mount Vernon. Martha Lyman was a progressive teacher for her day. Many of her students, including Louise, later went on to college.

Classes at the school included the basic "three R's," but in good weather, Miss Lyman took the children down behind the school to the Bronx River for nature walks, while she instructed them in botany and bird life. The girls also learned needlework, crocheting, and tatting, and prizes were awarded for the best work.

Louise, as we have seen from her organ-playing adventures, was full of fun. During recess she led the children in favorite pastimes such as wading in the Bronx River. Her wading sometimes ended in a swim with her dress on, and she had to be fished out and set on a shelf in the girls'

SCHOOL MAP of BRONXVILLE

SHOWING LOCATION of SCHOOLS
and COLLEGES THROUGH THE
YEARS



cloakroom while Miss Lyman dried out her shoes and clothes. Another game she enjoyed was sliding down the carriage-shed roof behind the Reformed Church.

Barnum's Circus was a big attraction in the 1860's, and



Martha Prescott Lyman, mistress of the Lyman School.

it featured a horrible-looking creature called "The-What-Is-It". The mere mention of it struck terror into the hearts of the children. One winter, Louise had scarlet fever and, as was the custom then, the doctor shaved her head. Recovered and as full of fire as ever, Louise returned to school wearing a close-fitting lace cap over her bald head. At recess, she had a new prank planned, but her schoolmates were reluctant to join in.

"Do as I tell you!" she commanded haughtily.

Her friends shook their heads.

"Then 'The-What-Is-It' will chase you!" With a yell, Louise snatched off the cap from her shining pate, bulged her eyes and launched herself at her classmates.

Shrieking in horror, they fled inside the school and threw themselves on Miss Lyman for protection. Struggling to keep from laughing, the teacher tied Louise's cap tight, and strictly forbade further visits of "The-What-Is-It".

Another private school was opened around 1861, in the back room of Ben Horton's general store, located on the north side of Swain Street (Pondfield Road West) across the tracks from Underhill's station. Miss Julia Wodding, niece of Lancaster Underhill, was the schoolmistress. She was followed by Teresa Felicia Lobieska, who claimed direct de-

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scendancy from Polish royalty.

Still another private school was kept by Miss Caroline Underhill, Lancaster's daughter, in the all-purpose Underhill home at the crossing. There was also the Masee School for Boys, which became Brantwood Hall, a school for young ladies. It was located in houses at the junction of Tanglewylde and Woodland, near Midland Avenue. Brantwood Hall conducted classes from 1906 until 1950.

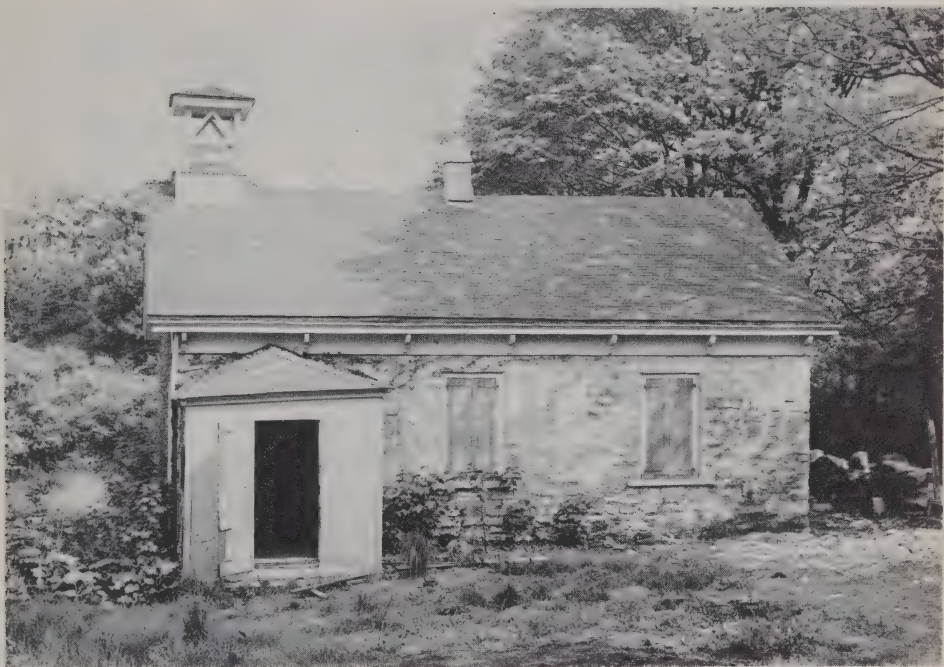
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The town of Eastchester, of which Bronxville is a part, built its first public school in 1683. It was located near Pelham Bay and served only the children in the southern part of Eastchester.

By 1797 there were four schools in Eastchester — one near Pelham Bay, one south of today's New York Central station in Mount Vernon, one near Scarsdale on White Plains Road and one near the corner of White Plains and California Roads.

The latter school, closest to Bronxville, was a small frame structure. About 1835 it was replaced by a building of Tuckahoe marble, which served boys and girls living as far south as Mount Vernon and as far north as Tuckahoe. This area came to be known as School District Number Two.

In 1869, the School Board bought a patch of land at Union Corners and moved the marble school to this site. The building still stands near the junction of New Rochelle Road and California Road and is being authentically restored by the Eastchester Historical Society, supported by donations of time, work and money by interested citizens. Although it was a public school, pupils were charged four dollars each semester, plus the cost of books, slates, paper and pencils. It was called Union Hill Free School. From 1878 to 1885 the Bronxville Dutch Reformed Church held Sunday afternoon services in the school and the Ladies Sewing Society sometimes used it for meetings. The school saw its last students leave in the Spring of 1884. The next year they went to a new brick school



Union Hill Free School, earliest Public School in the Village area.

built near the original site of the marble school on White Plains Road.

On a cold Wednesday morning in 1883, Bertrand Burtnett, son of Gulielma Masterton and Abraham Garrison Burtnett, trudged down New Rochelle Road to the little marble school-house. Turn the Time Machine back to that year and we will join him.

UNION CORNERS

The school bell was tolling from its little cupola as Bert Burtnett neared the bottom of the hill. He began to run. The frost had hardened the dirt road and he swerved back and forth to avoid catching his copper-toed boots in the deep ruts.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

He sped along the board fence enclosing the schoolyard and nipped through the gate. Other children, bundled to their ears, were entering the school, bowing and curtsying to the teacher, Mrs. Eliza Merritt, who stood at the door.

Inside the door was a small lobby. To the left was a shelf with a water bucket and dipper. Mrs. Merritt had already broken the ice crust from the water. Beneath the shelf, Bert placed his lunch pail, then took off his coat and cap hanging them on a peg above the shelf.

"That will do, Master Hunt," Mrs. Merritt nodded to a boy who stood happily tugging the bell rope in the corner. The tolling ceased and the schoolmistress shooed the last arrivals into the schoolroom.

The main room of the school had a high, vaulted ceiling. At the far end a raised platform held the teacher's desk on one side and a melodian on the other. In front of the platform was a row of wooden benches used by classes reciting their lessons.

Behind the benches, two rows of desks stood on either side of a large pot-bellied stove. Girls occupied desks to the left, boys those on the right. In back of the desks was another row of benches, used by students who were unprepared or who were being punished. Along the side walls were blackboards.

Bert went to the stove to warm his hands and feet, then took his place at his desk. He still wore his muffler against the chill of the room.

Mrs. Merritt went to the platform and turned to face the class. Immediately the shuffling of boots and slap of books ceased. The students bowed their hands while the teacher read a verse from the Bible. Then she went to the melodeon and led them through a rousing rendition of "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The school day had begun.

The sixth grade went to the front benches for History recitation. The other grades prepared their lessons, read and practised penmanship. Bertrand's grade was sent to the blackboard to add and subtract problems handed out by the teacher. As each class finished recitation, another went forward to deliver theirs. The small room was a beehive of various

PRANKS AND PRIMERS

activities, controlled closely by Mrs. Merritt who moved from platform to blackboard to desk and back again.

When she spied one boy drawing a pirate on the board beside an unfinished arithmetic problem she handed out swift and dreadful justice. The culprit, amid subdued giggles, was marched over to an empty desk on the girls' side of the room! There he suffered, ears growing redder by the minute, until noon recess.

After lunch and a drink from the water dipper, Bert and another boy were instructed to refill the wood box near the stove. They put on their coats and went outside to the woodpile, struggling to see who could carry the most in a single trip. When the box was full, they joined the other children who were sliding on the frozen brook behind the school.

Since it was Wednesday, the boys and girls needed no urging when Mrs. Merritt called them in for the afternoon session. Every Wednesday afternoon, regular studies were put aside while the teacher read exciting stories from "Youth's Companion," and led singing with the melodeon. With the old wood stove crackling merrily and snow falling past the windows, Bert and his schoolmates sat listening dreamily, transported beyond the classroom by the tales of heroism and adventure in far-away places.

At three, when Mrs. Merritt closed the book, and the notes of the last song faded away, the children bundled up and made their way home, with several halts and detours for snowball throwing and sliding.

Such was a school day in 1883. It was typical of earlier days in the little marble school. Things had not changed much since the first classes in 1835. Reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, geography and history were the subjects taught. In spite of the rugged conditions and small classroom space for all the grades, the students learned well under the fine teaching of Eliza Merritt and her predecessors.

During the year, there were several special occasions to which the children looked forward eagerly. Thanksgiving was celebrated with a turkey dinner for parents, teacher and pupils. Before the Christmas holidays, the children cut a tree and

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE



Bertrand R. Burtnett, grandson of Alexander Masterton, sporting a dashing Naval dress uniform of the late 1800's.

decorated it for the classroom, where they sang the traditional carols to the accompaniment of the melodeon. George Washington's Birthday saw the children digging for old cocked hats, breeches and dresses in attic trunks. These were worn in pageants and tableaux staged by the teacher.

When warm spring weather came, Mrs. Merritt often held her classes out in the schoolyard. Seated on a large flat rock beneath blossoming apple trees, she taught and heard recitations, accompanied by the lazy hum of bees and the

PRANKS AND PRIMERS

croaking of frogs from the brook. Bert and the other boys saw to it that a proper number of frogs entered the classroom each spring, concealed in pockets until the right moment, then released to hop among the ankles of squealing girls. Mrs. Merritt did not approve of this pastime, but if it was done properly, she was unable to single out the culprit.

Late in June, "Exhibition Day" took place. Flowers and ferns were brought in to make the classroom look like a woodland glen. Drawings, the better specimens of handwriting and arithmetic sums were posted on the walls for visiting parents and school trustees to admire.

When the visitors had gathered, the children sang the following song, to the tune of "Oh, Dear, What Can the Matter Be?"

Oh, dear, what can the matter be?

Dear, dear, what can the matter be?

Dear, dear, what can the matter be?

Parents don't visit the school.

They visit the drill to see murderous sabres,

They visit the circus, they visit their neighbors,

They visit their flocks, and the servant who labors,

Now why don't they visit the school?

Chorus —

They care for their horses, they care for their dollars,

They care for their lodges, they fancy fine collars,

But little we think, do they care for their scholars,

Because they don't visit the school.

Chorus —

We know we from hunger and cold are protected,

In knowledge and virtue our minds are directed,

But still we do think we are sadly neglected

Because they don't visit the school.

Chorus —

Now if they will come they'll find all in their places,

With nicely combed hair, with clean hands and clean faces,

All pleasant and happy with naught that disgraces,

Now why don't they visit the school?

Then, under watchful but twinkling eyes of trustees, mothers and fathers, the pupils performed. There were re-

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

citations of poems, and speeches by youthful orators with shaking knees. Next came a spelling bee and oral tests in reading, geography, and grammar.

Finally came the awarding of prizes to the best students and speeches by the trustees. When the last word was uttered and the last prize given, the boys and girls shot from the door with whoops and hollers, free for a whole summer of fishing, swimming, picnics and excursions.

BRONXVILLE'S FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ten years before Bertrand Burtnett started school at Union Corners, the first public school within Bronxville proper was built. Although the marble school was handy for Bert, it was a long way from the center of our young village. In 1870 Cornelius and Edward De Witt gave a plot of land on Pondfield Road for a village school. Work started immediately. A red-brown frame schoolhouse was erected on the west side of Pondfield, in the heart of the present business district. The school had boys' and girls' cloakrooms, and one classroom. Five years later a second classroom and library were added on the back.

Mrs. Grace Sanford was appointed teacher and principal, and she served from opening day in December, 1870 until 1892. Other teachers who came as the number of students increased were the Misses Mills, Latimer and Bates. Amarinta Swain Smith, wife of the town doctor, taught here, and so did a Canadian girl, Victoria McCollum. She later became the wife of Charles Dusenberry, son of Mary Masterton and Elias Dusenberry.

The little red schoolhouse offered the customary grammar school courses and a partial high school course. Its graduates included many of Bronxville's third generation children, among whom was Charles Dusenberry's younger sister, Amie.

Let us turn back the Machine to the mid-1880's and see school life in Miss Amie's day.

THE RED SCHOOLHOUSE

It promised to be a warm spring morning. Amie watched a fat robin singing outside the dining room window as she bolted her breakfast. The eight o'clock warning bell had already sounded from the school down in the valley, and she knew she would be late if she didn't hurry. Swallowing a final spoonful of porridge, she grabbed her books and lunch, kissed her mother, and shot forth from the old Masterton homestead.

Down Masterton Road she went, beneath trees lacy in their bright new greenery. At the Reformed Church she turned right, along Pondfield Road. The marsh was flooded where the school stands today. Some boys had built a raft, and it was tied at one side of the pond, waiting for its captain and crew.

The eight-thirty bell was pealing when Amie turned into the schoolyard. Inside, about fifty children were seated at their double desks in the central classroom. They stood when Mrs. Sanford entered, and wished her a good morning. The principal faced them and read a scripture from the Bible. Together they repeated the Lord's Prayer, and sang a hymn to the accompaniment of a small organ. Then the children broke up into classes, dividing themselves among the three rooms.

The morning was spent in recitation. Each day lessons were assigned in reading, arithmetic, spelling, history and geography, and each student was expected to study the lessons and recite them to the teacher on the next day. There was not much time in school for studying, so books had to be taken home and studied after school. When a student wasn't prepared and had no good excuse, he or she would have to stand in a corner wearing a paper dunce cap.

At noon, Amie ate her lunch quickly so she would have more time to play. Outside in the yard, boys were already playing Jacks and Mumbley Peg with their pocket knives. One group of girls was skipping rope to the rhythm of age-old rhymes, and others were getting ready for Blindman's Bluff. Amie came out just in time to be "it", and had the handkerchief tied over her eyes. She almost ran into the middle of the Mumbley Peg game, but swerved when she heard a sup-



The Red Schoolhouse of 1870

pressed giggle and tagged another girl.

The bell clanged again at five minutes of one, the signal for a rush to the washbasins. Teachers inspected hands before afternoon classes. It was advisable to have them well scrubbed.

The afternoon wore on slowly, with students wearying and teachers becoming a little impatient. It was miraculous how the bell at five of three revived tired spirits. Books snapped shut, pupils straightened their desks, and to the beat of a march played on the organ, classes filed solemnly out. In the yard, they broke ranks and raced off in every direction.

Amie tucked her books under her arm and went with some other girls to the "handy store" next to the school. Run by the sisters Ann Matilda Smith and Tilly Ann Tyler, the store sold groceries, notions, and best of all — candy. Amie bought a molasses peppermint stick and some licorice with her pennies.

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She chatted with the girls for a moment, then spied Stanley Gifford walking home in her direction. He waved and she ran to join him, sharing her licorice. Stanley lived up on Winter Hill in Tuckahoe.

The two friends shuffled and hopped along dusty Pondfield Road until they came to the marsh. Stanley halted and looked about cautiously.

"What's the matter?" whispered Amie, falling into the spirit of mystery.

Stanley held his finger to his lips and scowled importantly. Satisfied that the coast was clear, he darted off to a rocky place. Lifting a stone, he triumphantly hauled out a small shotgun, which he had hidden on the way to school.

"Keep behind me!" ordered Stanley, giving Amie his books to carry.



Interior view of 1870 school

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

They made their way along the edge of the pond, with Stanley crouched over his ready gun. Nearing a tree, he stopped and pointed at the branches.

"A giant bird-of-prey!" he hissed, remembering a recent nature lesson in school.

"It's not either!" affirmed Amie. "It's only a bluejay!"

"Never mind," said Stanley, and fired.

The unlucky jay fell at their feet.

"I thought it wasn't sporting to shoot a sitting bird!" Amie protested.

"It was either him or us," the hunter announced heroically. He cut off the bright wings. "Here — for your Sunday hat, Amie," offered Stanley with a bow.

Amie took them somewhat doubtfully and they continued their trek. Since Stanley had fired his only shell, they ambled up Masterton Road. At Amie's house, they found her cousin, young Bert Burtnett, waiting. He had come straight home from Union Corners, and was miffed because Amie was late. The three children played Indians until five o'clock. Then they went to the door of the basement kitchen where the Dusenberry's cook gave them thick slices of rye bread and butter and shooed the boys home. Amie went in to study until it was time to wash up for supper.

Amie had two brothers and a sister. Agnes and Elias were older and enjoyed more adult pastimes, but Amie and Charles played together on week-ends. They climbed on the gate posts in front of the old Masterton homestead, rode horses through the surrounding country, and played games in the barn on rainy days.

The Dusenberrys kept chickens, horses, cows and pigs on their land. One of Amie's favorite childhood pastimes was pig racing. She had harnesses made for two pigs and patiently trained them to pull a little cart. At a prearranged starting time on Saturdays or during vacation, Amie hitched up the pigs and took off down White Plains Road. From the other direction, Lulu Glover, a friend in Mount Vernon, raced north in her "single-pig" cart. Whichever cart reached the halfway point first was declared winner. Lulu occasionally had trouble with her locomotion and Amie would race all the way to Lulu's house to find her friend sitting glumly in her cart behind a stalled pig.



The Tyler home (left) and the Smith-Tyler "handy" store, which also served as Village post office for a time. The buildings were located on the west side of Pondfield Road beside the schoolhouse.



LIFE IN OLD BRONXVILLE

Keep the Time Machine Dial set in the 1880's and let us take a general look around Bronxville. It is still a sleepy country village. Surrounded by fields, the wooden Dutch Reformed Church looks down from the same rise it rests on today. Looking up the road, we note that Pondfield was narrower then, shaded by huge elms. On the left side as we walk toward the railroad station, is the original Underhill colonial farmhouse, later lived in by the Boltons and after that used by Miss Lyman as her school. In the 1880's it is owned by the Mertz family, who farm the surrounding land and sell the produce at Tyler's store.

Behind the Mertz Farm and beside the tracks sprawls the Kraft tannery. If the wind is in the southwest you can smell it. Mr. Kraft lives in a home on Cedar Street where St. Joseph's Church now stands. Kraft Avenue, once chained off and private, was named for him. There are several other frame houses on Cedar Street, with board fences and wood-sheds out back.

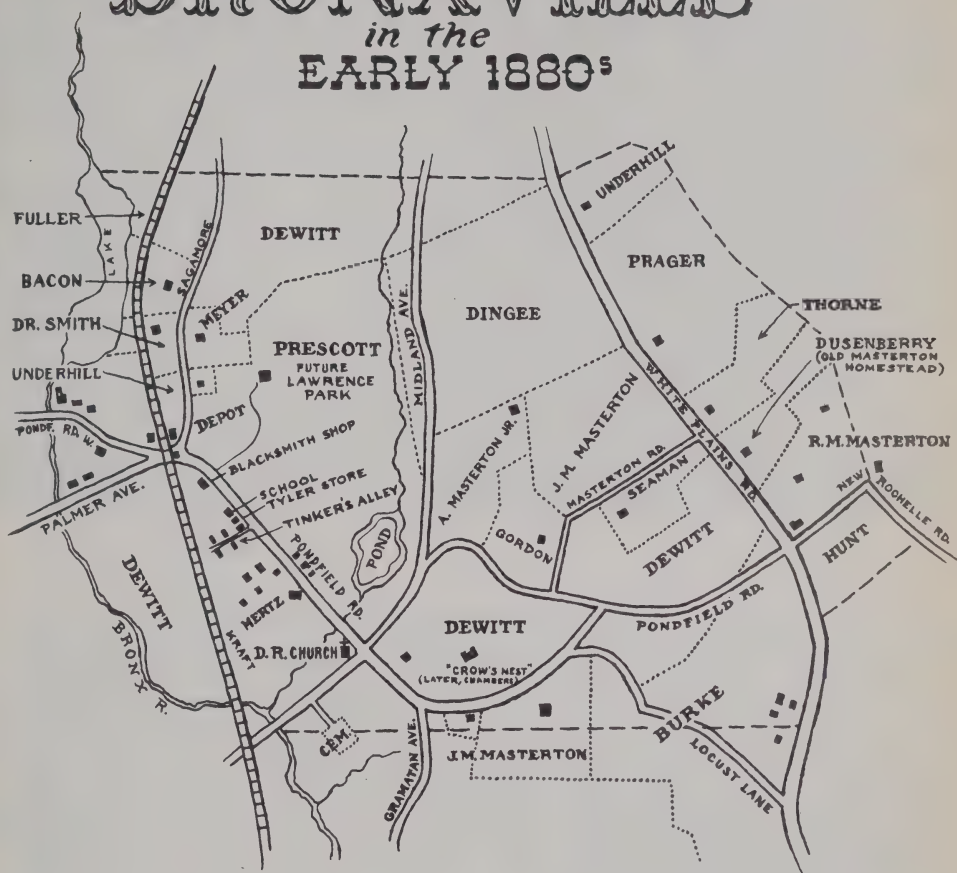
In the business area of today, we find back then only a few frame homes, the Tyler house and store, the red school-house, Kane's blacksmith shop, and Lancaster Underhill's depot and post office. Perhaps twice an hour, a farm wagon rattles down the dirt road, pulled by horses or oxen, raising a cloud of dust. Where Park Place turns off Pondfield, more frame houses stand, occupied by mill and tannery workers. The lane was called Tinker's Alley. Down Garden Avenue sit the barns of the Prescott farm, on the hillside overlooking the valley. Across the tracks, a farmhouse stands where the Lawrence Hospital will later rise. There are a few more houses and wooden tenements for workers at the mills, and the Swain estate, now Alger Court.

The great houses of the Mastertons, DeWitts, Prescotts, Morgans, and other early families stand on the hills above town, hidden among the trees.

As the sun sets, windows glow palely with the light of candles and kerosene lamps. When the evening train from New York is due, the thudding of horses' hooves breaks the

BRONXVILLE

in the
EARLY 1880's



stillness. Carriages from the country homes wheel smartly down Pondfield Road, brass lamps glimmering. The teams jingle up by the depot and halt in line as coachmen and footmen wait to take their masters home.

On summer weekends, many of the old families used to assemble carriages loaded with picnic hampers at one home or another, and then drive for two hours across country roads until they reached the beach at Rye. Here, on the stretch of



Cedar Street in the 1890's, looking toward Pondfield Road.



The Bridge Hotel, an old tavern and boarding house for workers at the Swain Mill, located on Swain Street (Pondfield Road West).

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empty sand, they lunched and swam in modest, full length bathing costumes.

Occasionally a gay ball was given at one of the homes. To the accompaniment of musicians brought from New York, the men and ladies swung about to the Waltz and the Lancers, supped on elegant salads, jellies and ices, and strolled across moonlit lawns until the strains of "Home Sweet Home" summoned the coachmen at midnight.

Archery was a popular sport for both ladies and men. The lawn of Alexander Masterton, Jr., was used for friendly contests on summer afternoons, with bright targets set up and a tall canvas screen stretched behind to catch stray arrows. Cool pitchers of lemonade and cakes stood at hand to refresh the warm and weary archers.

Many of the young people attended parties in New York, traveling in on the train to stay overnight with relatives or family friends. Other favorite amusements of the younger set were summer hayrides, or winter sleighrides, bundled under buffalo robes, and racing through the crisp night to the muffled clop of hooves and tinkle of bells.

It was a quiet, gentle life compared to the fast race of our modern civilization. Wouldn't it be fun to slip back for a day, and roam through our village then, or join boys and girls in a big bobsled behind a team of horses for a ride through the winter wilds of old Westchester?

In spite of the gracious life led by some old families in the 1870's and 80's, many parts of Bronxville began to fall back into wilderness. America suffered economic growing pains and depression in the 70's. Many businesses failed in our nation. Some residents of Bronxville moved away. Others lost much of their money and could no longer maintain their houses and grounds as they once did. Briars and weeds crept up driveways. Paint peeled from houses. Disease-carrying mosquitos bred in the old Pondfield swamp and along Bronxville Lake.

The little village drifted along without new life flowing in for many years. It was as though it was catching its breath after its first growing sprint. In this it mirrored all of America. Our whole country was making the transition from a farming



nation to a fast-growing industrial giant, not without a few steps backward to get a good start.

A famous blizzard roared into the village in 1888, and in that same memorable year, two men came who were to shape Bronxville's future.

Part V
THE SECOND WAVE
1888-



THE BLIZZARD

It started sometime after midnight, on March 12, 1888. The following morning, when Lancaster Underhill noted the leaden sky and swirling snow, he remembered his sharp twinges of rheumatism the day before and remarked to a customer that they were in for a real storm.

The snow now fell hard all day and night, whipped by gale winds stabbing inland off the sea. When it finally slackened and stopped, great drifts reached high against houses and buried the roads. Travel was impossible. The trains stopped running. Bronxville presented a lovely, far-northern appearance, and children, bundled to the ears, churned through the drifts and made tunnels and caves. Their parents shook their heads, thinking of the inconvenient side. A fine sight indeed, with spring almost due!

The great snow had tragic results, too. During the height of the storm, Robert Masterton suffered a heart attack and died.

In spite of the depth of snow, the heavy white blanket succumbed to shovels, ox plows, and the strengthening rays of the spring sun. The melt-off turned Pondfield Road into a mud-flat.

During the spring and summer of 1888, two second-wave pioneers arrived in our village. These men of wisdom and vision were to provide the drive which started the modern era of our town.

Frank Ross Chambers — tall, bearded, a splendid horse-man — moved with his wife into "Crow's Nest" during the first warm days of the year. A Southern gentleman transplanted to the North, Mr. Chambers rose to become president of the fine firm of men's clothiers, Rogers Peet. For fifty-two years he devoted his time and wealth to his adopted village of Bronxville, and became its beloved "First Citizen". An inspired leader in civic and religious matters, he was also vitally interested in education. Mr. Chambers became one of the original trustees of Teachers College, Columbia University. Locally, he became a trustee of the Bronxville Schools, and played a leading role in developing and improving the curriculum.



After the blizzard of 1888, bobsled heads down Pondfield from depot. To the left is the Tyler Store with school belfry showing beyond.



"Crows Nest", built by Francis Edmonds in 1850. Later the home of Frank R. Chambers.

THE SECOND WAVE

Later in the summer of 1888, William Van Duzer Lawrence, chemical manufacturer and recent arrival in New York from Montreal, entrained to Bronxville to pick up his children. The young Lawrences had been summering with relatives and were due to return to school. Not finding a hack at the depot, Mr. Lawrence walked up Pondfield to White Plains Road, noting the dusty, unpaved street, the homes past their prime, and the tangle of woods and briars on the hills. By the time he reached the top of Pondfield Road, he was breathing heavily, mopping his brow, and looking at Bronxville with something less than admiration.

In spite of his first impression, William Lawrence returned to Bronxville two years later to buy the old Prescott Farm, roughly bounded by today's Sagamore Road, Pondfield Road and Midland Avenue. Friends in New York had expressed the wish to move from the city to a more peaceful country atmosphere, still handy to New York business. Bronxville, with its rail connection, seemed to fit the requirement.

THE LAWRENCE IDEA

Immediately, Lawrence and architect Will Bates mapped the eighty-six acre farm, planned roads, and commenced building. It was not the "real estate development" we see mushrooming everywhere today. In those early days, one or two large, elegant homes were constructed each year. The houses were built in natural, park-like settings, with the beauty of the woods left untouched. The area, naturally enough, became known as Lawrence Park. The new settlers moving into town were people of culture and standing. Many were well-known painters, writers, and sculptors, and studios were built for them as part of the houses. Some of these homes may be identified by their studio windows in a drive through Lawrence Park today.

A literary and discussion club was quickly formed by the new villagers, and Mr. Lawrence built as a meeting place, the Casino, a rambling clubhouse behind the old Prescott Manor House overlooking the valley. Later, tennis courts were



William Van Duzer Lawrence, second-wave pioneer of Bronxville development.

constructed along Valley Road.

As each new home was occupied by satisfied owners, William Lawrence looked ahead. His success had been due to the common denominator among the new families — they were successful, interesting people with similar backgrounds and outlooks. Why not a whole village based on this idea — a village of upper middle-class, cultured inhabitants, able to live easily as neighbors and provide sound leadership for the community?

Working from this idea, he plunged ahead with more zeal than ever. While the number of homes kept growing in Lawrence Park, he purchased the Swain mansion, "Stone-



Tennis enthusiasts pose in front of Masterton-Dusenberry home in the gay nineties. Amie Dusenberry is seated on the lawn, second from the left.

leigh", from Alger and Bradley. The fine old home became Bronxville's first apartment house. The other buildings in Alger Court followed later. On the Yonkers side of the village, he bought a large tract of land which became Lawrence Park West. In the early years of the 20th century, more beautiful homes rose here, together with a private golf course. The Lawrence home, "Westlands", was built in this western section.

THE GRAMATAN

As a crown to set off the original Lawrence Park heights, William Lawrence had Will Bates design a white, colonial style hotel, situated on Sunset Hill, where legend says Gramatan signed the agreement with Pell. The first Hotel Gramatan



Hotel Gramatan in the early 1900's.

opened in 1897, two hundred and eleven years after Pell's treaty. It was furnished in antiques and decorated with paintings provided by Lawrence Park artists. Here, friends of Bronxville residents could have comfortable lodgings with a superb view of the village.

Two years after it opened, the hotel caught fire. Its location high up on the hill proved too much for the flimsy fire equipment and pumpers available. It all but burned to the ground. Only the kitchen wing survived.

In 1904, the present hotel, much larger than the first, was built on the same site. It quickly became a fashionable spot for vacationing New Yorkers and travelers from all over the world. On the guest list are such names as Theodore Roosevelt, Pipep-Galaz, former President of Switzerland, Theodore Dreiser, Greta Garbo, and Mrs. George Armstrong Custer. The wife of the dashing general who was killed at the Little Big Horn moved from the Gramatan to a home in Lawrence Park, at 6 Chestnut Avenue. Custer Place was named in her honor.

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS

With more residents flowing into Bronxville, the need arose for more stores and services. The old arcade shops on either side of the foot of Sagamore Road were built by Mr. Lawrence in 1904 (In 1960, the Arcade across from the hotel was razed to make way for a newer, larger building.) Across the railroad, another group of shops shared the ground floor of Studio Arcade, with studio apartments for artists above. More shopping areas were built later along today's business district — Pondfield Road and Palmer Avenue. Early shops in Bronxville included Weber's Market and Duleto's Tailor Shop. The Gramatan Bank opened in 1906.

Old time residents shook their heads as the peaceful little country settlement expanded. It is a little sad to see ancient trees and old houses come down to make way for new buildings. But Bronxville's newcomers saw only a charming, tasteful village growing with them, offering beauty, convenience, and fresh air.

Through the years, generations of Lawrences have followed the "Lawrence Idea" and are continuing it today, adapting it to the demands of a much larger but still similar population. We will discuss more of the Lawrence contributions to Bronxville shortly.

BRONXVILLE BECOMES OFFICIAL

The old Bronxville we have been talking about until now was merely one settlement in the Town of Eastchester, where the town officials and government were located. For some time, various plans had been afoot to deal with Bronxville's political status. One such plan would have incorporated it with Mount Vernon. Another proposed to make it part of Tuckahoe. Much later, a bill was proposed in the state legislature to have all of Eastchester annexed to New York City.

Most Bronxville citizens wanted to preserve our community's independence. Leading the battle was attorney Charles Francis Bates, brother of Will Bates, the architect. He was successful on April 19, 1898, when it was voted to incorporate

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

Bronxville as a separate village within the Town of Eastchester.

On the following day, America went to war with Spain. Charles Bates went to fight more dangerous battles with his regiment. He returned from the Philippines Expedition as a colonel.

BUILDING A VILLAGE

With houses and stores, a railroad station, a church, small factories, and a school, you might wonder what more was needed to become a village. There were many things needed, now that Bronxville was on its own.

Formal papers for incorporation were filed on May 9, 1898. On May 19, the first Board of Trustees met at the Sagamore Road home of Francis Bacon, newly-elected as Bronxville's president. Mr. Bacon was also president of the Bacon Piano Company. From the very beginning, no Bronxville president, mayor, or trustee has received pay for guiding our village. We have always been lucky to have dedicated business and professional men who have taken village jobs merely for the satisfaction of helping Bronxville and its citizens. In the back of the book you will find a list of



Francis R. Bacon, first Village president.

THE SECOND WAVE

presidents and mayors of our community, and a diagram of our village government.

The first trustees met around Mr. Bacon's table beneath a kerosene lamp and discussed what the new village needed. The basic needs they arrived at were: 1) Ordinances or rules to run the village for everyone's comfort and protection; 2) Police to enforce the laws; 3) Firemen to protect the homes and businesses; 4) a system to insure public health; and 5) a means to tax property owners to pay for the above services.

ORDINANCES

The trustees, with a lawyer's help, published the first village ordinances in 1899. Many more have been added and old ones repealed as times change. Some early ordinances sound funny today. One stated:

"No person shall permit horses or other animals to gnaw, chew or deface trees, shrubs, grass or plants".

Another ordinance made it unlawful:

"To operate a motor vehicle, wagon, carriage, omnibus, sleigh, bicycle or tricycle at more than one mile in six minutes" along village streets.

As more motor cars began to appear, many new ordinances dealt with their behavior. Cars were actually made in Bronxville in the early 1900's at the Ward Leonard Company, occupying the old Underhill-Swain mill on the Bronx River.

POLICE

At first, Bronxville's police force consisted of fourteen volunteer citizens who could be called out in case of emergency, much like the auxiliary police many towns have today.

In 1898, after incorporation, Edward Stiles and Patrick Blake were appointed policemen without pay. Stiles became chief, which earned him twenty-five cents an hour. He increased his income by renting the upstairs room of his store as a Village Hall.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

In 1901, Rudolph Hylson joined the Force. For two dollars a day he acted as a constable and also cut the grass in the village streets.

That same year, the "grandfather" of Bronxville's police force, Elmer Van Buren, joined the ranks. He was promoted to captain, then chief, and held that job until 1939.

The first uniforms were issued in 1905. Bicycles were used to rush to emergencies. Later, of course, motorcycles and patrol cars replaced these.

As the village grew, so did the police force. Today it is an efficient law-enforcement agency staffed with 23 trained officers equipped with 3 radio cars, 3 motorcycles, modern weapons, detention cells, a pistol range, and a specially trained police dog.

FIREMEN

Fires in the early days were fought by volunteer bucket brigades which gathered and formed a line between the blaze and the nearest well or pond.

In 1895, the Bronxville Hose Company was formed. It had a little two-wheeled hose cart stored in a shed located where the old Gramatan Bank stands on Kraft Avenue. When an alarm sounded, the volunteers ran to the shed, commandeered the first horse going by, hitched him to the cart and galloped off. If the fire was close by, they pulled the cart themselves. Later, Frederick Kraft, owner of the tanning factory, dispatched a horse and wagon to the shed at first alarm, and rushed firemen and cart to the blaze. The Kraft tanning factory itself was the victim of one of Bronxville's worst fires. It was totally destroyed in 1922.

Fire protection was aided in 1896 when the New Rochelle Water Company laid the first water mains in the village. Fifteen hydrants were scattered here and there, giving the firefighters a dependable source of water if they could reach a hydrant with their hose.



Bronxville's first fire engine, a hose cart of the 1890's.



Volunteer firemen and their horse-drawn "steamer" in the early 1900's.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

When Bronxville was incorporated, the village trustees were able to raise tax money and purchase a horsedrawn "steamer pump," which thundered along to fires trailing sparks, smoke and steam, with the volunteers clinging heroically to its sides. As the auto came into use, engines replaced horses and the old steam pumper.

The volunteer firemen of Bronxville's past were prominent citizens, and to belong to the group was an honor. Their annual picnics and parties were famous social events. The volunteer system has lasted through the years, although today we have a nucleus of professional firemen to get the modern engines rolling fast and maintain the complex equipment. Our Bronxville Engine and Hose Company No. 2 is a part of the Eastchester Fire Department. At our engine house, we have 7 professional firemen, a pumper, emergency squad truck, and a spare pumper. In addition, there are approximately 30 volunteer firemen.

VILLAGE HEALTH

No medical man, William Van Duzer Lawrence nevertheless made an early contribution toward Bronxville's good health. There were doctors in town but no hospital or infirmary in the early 1900's. This occasioned a Lawrence family emergency which brought far-reaching results.

Set the Time Machine for 1906.

"WITH UTMOST SPEED!"

Dudley Lawrence left his office in New York at noon, for a luncheon engagement at the Union League Club. During lunch, he first experienced the stabbing pain in his abdomen. Gritting his teeth, he excused himself and had a cab called to take him to Grand Central Station.

When he arrived at his home in Bronxville, the pain was worse. His forehead was fiery, but chills racked his body. His young wife, Kate Birch Lawrence, helped him to bed, her face showing concern. Dudley tried to sleep, but instead drifted into and out of feverish fantasies as he thrashed



Dudley B. Lawrence



Anna Lawrence Bisland

restlessly.

Anna Bisland, Dudley's sister, came by later, and Kate was glad for her company. Dudley had shown no sign of improvement, and by now they all were convinced it was something more serious than an upset stomach. Kate cranked up the phone and reached the family friend and surgeon, Dr. Hartwell, in New York. He promised to hurry out.

The doctor arrived by train in the evening, and made a swift examination. As he came from Dudley's room, the ladies waited anxiously for his diagnosis.

"Acute appendicitis, I'm afraid. He'll have to go to the hospital with utmost speed. It may rupture at any time." Dr. Hartwell put on his coat, then glanced at his watch.

"Where? Mount Vernon, or Yonkers?" asked Kate, pale in the flickering light from the hall lamp.

The doctor mentally weighed the alternatives as he rearranged his bag. Then he faced them.

"Neither, I'm afraid. It would mean a rough trip by



carriage over country roads in either case. He should be kept flat on his back and quiet, to avoid the danger of the appendix bursting."

"Then —?" faltered Anna.

"Taking him to New York by train will be the smoothest and safest solution. When is the next train inbound?"

"The last one, just after midnight," Anna answered.

"But it seems so far to go, Doctor —," Kate appealed. "Dare we risk the time?"

Doctor Hartwell smiled and took Kate's hand. "I assure you this way holds the least risk. Now, I'll make arrangements at the depot if you and Anna will arrange for a wagon and mattress, to carry him to the train."

Anxious eyes watched the beam of light at the bend to the north, then saw the locomotive's headlamp swing into view. A minute later, the midnight train roared down the track and hissed to a grinding halt in a mist of steam.

With the aid of the brakeman and conductor, Dudley was lifted from the wagon on mattress and springs, and gently

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placed on the floor of the baggage car. Kate and Anna were assisted up beside him, and Dr. Hartwell followed, with the conductor. The car door was slid shut with a clang. The brakeman raised and lowered his lantern, and swung aboard a passenger car. Huffing slowly into motion, the engine picked up speed. Its mournful whistle wailed in the night.

Kneeling beside Dudley, the surgeon counted his patient's pulse, regarding his watch in the dim glow of a kerosene lantern hanging above. He snapped the watch shut and sat down on a trunk.

"Well, ladies, we've done all we can for now. It's up to the Lord and the New York Central."

Kate sat watching her husband's pale face and listening to the wheels clicking off the miles. The cadence seemed to say, "We'll be in time, we'll be in time —." She prayed it would be so.



The original Lawrence Hospital in 1909.

BRONXVILLE GETS ITS HOSPITAL

The train was in time. Within an hour, it arrived at Grand Central, where a horse-drawn ambulance was waiting. Dudley was rushed to the hospital and his appendix was removed. He recovered completely.

During this time, the elder Lawrences were away in Europe. When they returned and heard of their son's ordeal, William Lawrence characteristically took immediate action. Bronxville needed its own hospital and the quickest way to get it was to put up the funds himself. He donated \$100,000, then another \$50,000, followed by part of another \$13,850. In 1909 the yellow brick hospital rose where it stands today, dwarfed perhaps by recent additions built by Bronxville's citizens, but it will always be "Lawrence Hospital," a fitting memorial to a man who loved our village.

HISTORY RELIVED

A stranger ambling through the village on the 30th of May, 1909, might well have rubbed his eyes, looked again, and sprinted for the new hospital and medical care.

He would have just concern for his sanity, for moving among the trees in DeWitt Woods below the Gramatan were whole tribes of menacing Indians, Anne Hutchinson, Jonas Bronck, Thomas Pell, Captain John Underhill, George Washington, and a host of additional famous historical figures.

The occasion was a spectacular pageant, staged by villagers to raise two thousand dollars for the hospital. In seven episodes covering the period from 1614 to 1846, more than six hundred citizens in authentic costumes, together with scores of horses and props, re-enacted key events in Westchester and village history. Children and adults alike watched, wide-eyed, as savages menaced settlers, Washington held off the Redcoats, the British spy, Andre, was seized, and Washington Irving chatted with such renowned associates as Edgar Allen Poe, James Fenimore Cooper, Longfellow, Hawthorne, and Daniel Webster.



Spectators at historical pageant of 1909. William Lawrence is wearing the beaver hat.

Guest of honor Charles Evans Hughes, Governor of New York, watched the thundering horses and dramatic scenes as raptly as the rest. Never has there been a presentation to equal it in the county's history.

After the dust settled, Governor Hughes dined at the home of Arthur Lawrence, and joined the citizens of Bronxville at a gala costume ball at the Hotel Gramatan.

That same day, the Lawrence Hospital was officially opened. From the first, the hospital welcomed patients of all races, creeds, and colors. It was designed to serve all of Eastchester. Mr. Lawrence gave further large donations to equip it, and left an endowment for its support. In addition, he gave his time and energy, serving as the Hospital's president until his death in 1927.

CONTINUED GROWTH

Better health conditions for our village were also insured by a sewer system, the first of which was laid in 1903. Other services came early in the century. The home of William Kraft, located where St. Joseph's Church now stands, was the first to have electricity, back in 1899. Gas mains were laid in 1905. At first, gas was used for street lamps and home lighting, but as electricity took over, gas became the main cooking fuel.

More and more water mains were put in by the New Rochelle Water Company as the years rolled by, replacing individual wells. However, many of the Lawrence properties continued to be supplied from deep artesian wells.

At the first meeting of the village trustees, Frank Ross Chambers was appointed street commissioner. As was his custom, he took his job seriously. At his own expense, he had Pondfield Road paved from the railroad tracks to the Reformed Church. In 1901, he made the village a gift of Poplar Street. Sidewalks appeared in 1906 along Pondfield Road and Cedar Street. They were of handsome blue flagstone.

THE VILLAGE HALL

For the first eight years after incorporation, Bronxville's trustees met in each other's homes, at the rented office above Constable Stile's store, or later in a building on Park Place.

This wasn't an ideal arrangement for a fast-growing village, so in 1903, local residents voted to authorize the purchase of land for a Village Hall. A lot on the corner of Pondfield Road and Kraft Avenue was purchased from William Lawrence and Frank Chambers.

While the trustees scratched their heads and sought a way to raise funds to build, Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Chambers together offered to give Bronxville a Village Hall, designed in classic Greek-revival style. The generous offer was accepted.

With a grand celebration, our village's proud residents commemorated the opening of the gleaming white building

THE SECOND WAVE

in October, 1906. Filing between tall white pillars, residents opened eyes wide at the sight of offices, an auditorium, a library, gymnasium, bowling alleys and a large swimming pool. In addition to village offices, the new center housed the Post Office, Fire and Police Departments.

This picturesque building stood until 1940. No longer large enough to contain the various village functions as Bronxville expanded, it fell beneath wreckers' hammers to make way for the present block of shops and offices. In 1942, our local government and police moved into the Georgian Colonial-style Village Hall at Midland and Pondfield. At the same time, the library moved into its handsome building across the street. Our fire engines were in temporary quarters in the Cedar Street Garage until the firehouse on Midland and Poplar was finished in 1948.



The Village Hall donated by Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Chambers. The Fire House was in the wing at the right, toward Kraft Avenue.



Present Village Hall (above) and Library (below), built in 1942.



PEOPLE AND CHANGE

Our town had been blessed with natural beauty since the land assumed its present form. Under wise guidance of trustees, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Chambers, and other village fathers, Bronxville's natural features were preserved as much as possible. It became rapidly less a sleepy little settlement and more of a smart, fashionable village. People with comfortable incomes moved to town. Look at the population figures in the early years of this century:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>
1900	579
1905	999
1910	1863
1915	2240
1920	3055
1925	4040

THE SECOND WAVE

The second wave was really thundering in! Where did they find room in one square mile? The answer lies in the changing pattern of living in the 20th century.

Our early homes, situated on sizeable lots which often included small farms, were of a past era. Land was in demand and prices for it rose. Gradually, pieces of estates were sold off and subdivided. Many large homes were built on these smaller lots to meet the demand.

Then, to provide quarters for those who did not wish to buy real estate, the apartment houses began to tower around Bronxville.

Mr. Lawrence was successful in his first apartment experiment in Alger Court, and proceeded to erect many other apartment buildings, singly and in groups. Another housing idea was the "Community house" — individual-type homes connected together, with common services such as heating and water supply. Bolton Gardens, across from school, is an example of a "community house" development, designed like the apartment, to provide home for more people on less land.

Other real estate developers built housing in Bronxville, but the Lawrence family owned a majority of apartment-type dwellings. A new trend in our times is the "cooperative" apartment and community house, where the dwelling space is sold to the occupant, just as a house would be. There is no rent, naturally, but a monthly charge is paid to a Management Company, such as the Lawrences, to provide services and maintenance.

Lancaster Underhill and Alexander Masterton would probably not recognize our village today as the Bronxville they loved. There are not so many trees. Tall buildings hide patches of sky they knew. Fields and woods are sprinkled full of homes. Traffic jams crowd Pondfield Road on any day. In many ways we regret the changes, but this same thing is happening the world over. With all the alterations on its land, Bronxville has still managed to retain much natural beauty and much of the character of earlier days — far more than most communities.



Bronxville's second Public School, built on site of the first in 1906.

THE YELLOW SCHOOL

Children formed a large portion of the population increase. As early as the turn of the century, the red schoolhouse on Pondfield Road was overcrowded. Land acquired back in 1880, plus donations of land by Frank Chambers and William Lawrence, gave the school frontage on Pondfield Road, Park Place and Kraft Avenue. On this property, where shops, markets and theater stand today, a new school was erected in 1905. It was built of brick and terra cotta of a yellowish hue.

The old red schoolhouse was moved to the rear of the property and used until the new building opened in 1906. The first classes were much as they had been in the late 1800's, consisting of standard grammar school courses and an incomplete high school curriculum. Later a Kindergarten, Manual Training shop and Home Economics Department were added, a gift from Mr. Chambers.

In a few years the Yellow School was overcrowded. In 1911, four new classrooms were added, making a total of one room for each grade.

More and more pupils enrolled. Additional room was needed, but World War I interrupted any new building plans.

THE SECOND WAVE

When the high school department was accredited officially with the New York State Board of Regents in 1922, the upper school classes were moved to buildings off Midland Avenue owned by Brantwood Hall Private School. Even Sunday school space in village churches was used for classrooms during the week. Crowded schools are not strictly a problem of our time.

TODAY'S RED BRICK SCHOOL

A new school could not be put off any longer. There was enough land on Pondfield Road to build a larger building, but with steadily increasing automobile traffic and a thriving shopping area surrounding it, the School Board considered the property unsafe.

The only large tract of land owned by the Village was the old Pond Field, a purchase which had been arranged by Frank Chambers and William Lawrence for a village park. The location was ideal and offered acreage for playgrounds and athletic fields. The only problem was that much of it often was covered by water as in earlier days. Part of the land was always marshy, even in summer. Arthur Medlar's riding and livery stable was located on the site of the present school auditorium. Villagers used the area for boating, fishing, and skating in the winter.

In spite of the drawbacks in the land, and over the protests of many (some felt any buildings would eventually sink), it was voted to trade the school land on Pondfield Road for the Pond Field itself. The switch was made in 1923.

Frank Chambers offered a large pledge of his own funds with characteristic generosity. With this help, Bronxville could start building the new school. Careful plans were made by architects and engineers. Heavy piles were driven into the soft ground to support great weight. Fill was hauled in.

By 1925, the elementary wing and the high school wing were completed. Five years later the connecting junior high school portion was constructed. It is a splendid-looking school, well conceived and constructed, although some settling has occurred. Only recently have new additions become necessary.

Behind the school, the swamp problem was conquered for the most part in 1926, when the old drainage brook



The north wing of the Public School as it stood, newly completed, in the mid-1920's.

paralleling Midland Avenue was buried underground in a large concrete pipe which empties into the Bronx River. Further drainage work later reclaimed the varsity playing field and track area dedicated to Mr. Chambers in gratitude for his contributions and long service to the Bronxville schools.

Not content with a handsome building, Bronxville's citizens made certain that the school it housed was first-rate. Ranks of distinguished educators have served to shape the Bronxville school system into one of the finest in America. It has pioneered in modern educational developments, without forgetting the importance of the basic studies.

The school auditorium, once considered too big ever to fill, serves not only students but the village in general as meeting place, forum, concert hall and theater. Our school is an important center in Bronxville's life, and we can be justly proud of it.

NEW CHURCHES

I CHRIST CHURCH

The old Dutch Reformed Church was the only public place of worship in Bronxville for many years. Those of other faiths had to travel elsewhere of a Sunday morning. But as the village grew, so did the need for churches.

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Second to arrive was the Episcopal Church. Some forty-five Episcopalians began to worship together in the old Casino building in 1898, where the Reverend Epiphanius Wilson officiated. In 1900, under the Reverend William Smith, the group rented a room in Pick's grocery store, located near the site of today's First Westchester National Bank, and conducted services there.

Not an Episcopalian himself, William Lawrence generously donated land at the junction of Kensington and Sagamore Roads to the growing church. The cornerstone for the house of worship was laid in 1901, and Christ Church of Bronxville held its first service under its own roof on March 16, 1902. The Reverend Richard Hayward was the first rector. Since then the church has grown steadily and made several additions to its buildings.

II ST. JOSEPH'S

Like the Episcopalians, the Catholic members of our community began local services without a church. They met in the Hotel Gramatan on October 5, 1905, where Father John McCormick of Tuckahoe celebrated mass, and continued there for some months. In 1906, a lot was purchased on the corner of Park Place and Kraft Avenue. When the yellow school was completed, the church members purchased the old red schoolhouse and had it moved to their new lot. It was converted to a church and dedicated as "St. Joseph's" in 1907.

A young priest, Father Joseph L. McCann, came to serve the new church, which was technically a "mission" of the church of the Immaculate Conception in Tuckahoe. Father McCann and the little church grew together. In 1922, St. Joseph's became an independent parish, with Father McCann, loved and respected by villagers of all faiths, as rector.

In 1927, construction of the present church began on the site of the former Kraft home, at Kraft Avenue and Cedar Street. Under Father McCann and successive priests, St. Joseph's has increased in membership and has added a parochial school for the children of its members.

III WEST CENTER CHURCH

While not technically in Bronxville, the West Center Church was originally an offshoot of our Dutch Reformed

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Church, and served residents living in the Armour Villa area and northwestern corner of our town. It actually started as a Sunday school back in 1912, so that children would not have to travel so far.

A small wooden building was set up at Cross Street and Wilbur Place. It soon expanded into a church where Bronxville Dutch Reformed ministers came to conduct services.

In 1927 the West Center Church went on its own and became Congregational. Its first pastor was the Reverend William T. Heath. In ensuing years it has become a strong, vital community church and center. The present church is located on Chatfield and Pondfield Road West.

IV FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST

Christian Scientists in Bronxville began meeting together in the old Village Hall, where space was rented in 1915. By 1918, Wednesday evening meetings were added. A year later, a Christian Science Reading Room was opened two days each week in the Village Hall, and the Society began presenting free public lectures on Christian Science.

The Society became officially incorporated in Bronxville in 1920, when the present church land was purchased on Tanglewylde Avenue. In 1925 the Sunday school wing of the present building was opened. The main meeting room portion was completed four years later. In handsome colonial style, the church is one of the most attractive in town. In addition to free lecture programs and services, the Society has a Reading Room for the public on Pondfield Road, in the Village center.

V THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

The first Lutheran services in Bronxville were conducted in 1916, shortly after Concordia Collegiate Institute opened its classes. Although open to the public, these early services were held on the Concordia campus through Easter, 1943. At that time, the chapel was moved to the renovated Leonard house and named The Bronxville Community Chapel, Lutheran. A community nursery and kindergarten was started in the Leonard house, with other grades added later. The handsome brick church was dedicated in 1950 as the Village Lutheran Church. It was enlarged to its present size in 1960. The

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Reverend Howard Halter has served as pastor to chapel and church since 1941. The Chapel Day School, in the church building, includes nursery through sixth grade classes.

VI GROWTH OF THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

The old frame building of the First Dutch Reformed Church sat on the hill at Pondfield and Midland until the expanding membership demanded more space. The present church replaced it in 1926 when the massive stone sanctuary, designed by Harry Leslie Walker, was consecrated on Christmas afternoon. In the mid-decade of the twentieth century, a large expansion program was completed under the leadership of the Reverend Lowell R. Ditzen. Today the Reformed Church is the largest in the village, with a complex of church school classrooms and a large recreation hall covering the hillside behind the sanctuary and cloister.

The Reformed Church was the spiritual home of Bronxville's beloved Frank Ross Chambers, First Citizen of Bronxville until his death in 1940 at the age of 89. He supported the church financially and with his talents and energy. Each Sabbath morning until he died, he climbed the hill to the Sunday school and served as its superintendent and teacher.



PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE



FRANK ROSS CHAMBERS

Mr. Chambers was Bronxville's beloved First Citizen during the years of our village's rapid "second wave" growth. Sitting tall astride his splendid horse, he looked the part of a general of cavalry. Some of his work and contributions to Bronxville have been mentioned in the text, but his constant devotion and great energy expended in village government, school, hospital, library and church affairs cannot be adequately expressed in words.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVES

America began to acquire its title, "A Nation on Wheels", in the nineteenth century, but it was the automobile which made it stick. The number of cars increased rapidly in the early years of this century, and is still growing, to the consternation of Bronxville's traffic policemen. Old dirt roads which had served the village for more than a century, were paved over with asphalt or cement. Many new roads began to criss-cross the community. During the first quarter of the 1900's a trolley line ran from Gramatan Avenue into town along Poplar Street, Midland Avenue, and on to Tuckahoe and White Plains. Another trolley came up White Plains Road from Mount Vernon.

Arthur Lawrence, son of William, was responsible for purchasing the necessary real estate for a north-south highway connecting White Plains and New York City. This scenic road was opened in 1925 as the Bronx River Parkway. Narrow and twisting by modern standards, it is still one of the most beautiful parkways in the nation. Arthur Lawrence served on the board of the Parkway Commission for many years. The construction of the amusement park, "Playland," in Rye, was his concept. The original donation of land for the Parkway was made by Frank Chambers, who contributed real estate on Bronxville's western border.

The Harlem Division of the New York Central Railroad, always an important factor in Bronxville's growth, increased its service to our village as the number of commuters grew.

In 1893, a permanent station was built on the east side of the tracks, where the taxi stand is located. Today's main station went up in 1917, with the matching shelter across the tracks following in 1923.

By 1910, the railroad was fully electrified as far as White Plains, removing a source of noise, cinders and smoke. The dangerous grade crossing of Pondfield Road was eliminated by the underpass in 1917.

The railroad, in one sense, is the lifeline of Bronxville, since each day it connects thousands of villagers and nearby residents with their places of business in the city.



From Pondfield Road crossing, looking toward Fleetwood. On the left is 1893 station. On right, Gus Pick's store where Episcopalians held services before Christ Church was built.

TWO COLLEGES

For a small village one mile square, Bronxville is unusual in having two colleges. One is actually across the border in the city of Yonkers, but it is considered a Bronxville institution.

In 1908, a fourteen-acre tract of land along White Plains Road was purchased by the Lutheran Church in America. Two years later, students began classes in Concordia Collegiate Institute. Using former residences on the land as classrooms and dormitories, the first students were given a high school education. In 1918, the course of study became "college preparatory," in addition to the regular religious program. In this way, students at Concordia could elect to pursue careers other than Lutheran ministry. In 1936, with further expansion, Concordia became an accredited Junior College. This vital coeducational institution continues to grow and build over the years and Bronxville is proud to have it within its borders.

In 1926, Bronxville's second college was envisioned by William Van Duzer Lawrence. He donated funds to establish a top-level, progressive college for young ladies as a permanent memorial to his wife, Sarah, who had died that same year. Working with America's leading educators, Mr. Lawrence

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proceeded with customary energy and zeal. Unhappily, his death in 1927 prevented his seeing this last dream fulfilled.

Sarah Lawrence College opened in 1928, in Lawrence Park West, off Kimball Avenue. The location was the sight of the Lawrence family home, Westlands. It began as a Junior College, the first in New York State, but in the early 1930's it began to carry advanced students through a full Bachelor of Arts Degree. In 1945, Sarah Lawrence became a full four-year college.

During the early years, Sarah Lawrence College was closely associated with Vassar College whose president, Henry MacCracken, and trustees, helped plan and oversee its organization. Today, Sarah Lawrence is one of America's top women's colleges, maintaining a high level of individual instruction while continuing to build and expand.

WAR YEARS

As have all villages, towns and cities throughout our nation, Bronxville has sent her sons and daughters to fight for Man's freedom. World Wars I, II, and Korea have cost us the lives of many, but they, and those who came home, have performed with gallantry which is a great credit to our village.

On the home front, Bronxville has always pitched in with whole-hearted support to aid the front lines, following the lead of those earlier ladies in Civil War days who journeyed to Yonkers by coach to make bandages for Federal wounded.

In such activities as War Bond sales, Red Cross, Civil Defense, and numerous volunteer agencies, Bronxville has contributed outstanding service to America.

We have been fortunate, as a country, to have escaped the ravages of war at home thus far this century. The threat of bombing was possible during World War II. On many a night during the years 1941-1945, citizens sprang from their beds at the unearthly screaming of the air raid sirens. Air defense searchlights probed the sky as steel-helmeted wardens patrolled our streets, making sure no lights violated the "blackout" to offer an enemy plane a pinpoint target for bombs. Most of these alarms were drills, but on one or two occasions, temporarily unidentified aircraft caused actual alerts.

SPARE TIME FUN

As busy as the village was in growing up, its citizens still found time for sports and play. Let's dial back to the first half of this century and see some of the things they did in their spare time.

Boys and girls played many of the same games they play today, especially the younger ones. There were no regular "after-school" sports for about the first quarter of the century, so children were thrown more on their own devices. Marbles, hop-scotch, skiprope, kite flying, mumbley peg, tag, red rover and other traditional games were played on school grounds during recess and after school. Baseball became popular after the Civil War, and Bronxville boys played "sandlot" ball on vacant fields. Informal football and basketball did not catch on widely until after the early years of the 1900's.

On hot summer days, a cooling swim could be had in Bronxville Lake, above the dam. This was the village "swimming hole," until the water was declared impure and the Park Commission closed it to all but fish, ducks, and turtles. Then, as now, Bronxville Lake was packed with skaters in the cold weather. Often it would be frozen most of the winter. At night, skaters would build big bonfires on the shore, for warming-up and marshmallow toasting. The frozen Pond Field was handy for everyone living near the village center. When the Siwanoy Country Club was built in 1901, it flooded the Fox Woods for skating in the winter. The Field Club presently floods a rink each winter. Amateur hockey teams from Bronxville were among the best in America in the early 1900's.

That All-American pastime, the picnic, was a favorite village activity. On a pleasant Sunday afternoon, many groups could be found along the Bronx River, enjoying hampers of food, games, and wading. Sunday school picnics, Church picnics, Club picnics, large family picnics — everyone loved an outing. Perhaps the most famous of all was the Firemen's Picnic, held on the river behind Lawrence Hospital. The social lions of the Volunteer Hose Company prided themselves on both fire-fighting ability and party functions. The picnic was



sometimes crowned by a wild race in washtubs down the river, with most tubs turning submarine before their pilots reached the finish line.

Large group outings by carriage to Rye Beach and City

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE



Old swimming hole above dam in Bronxville Lake, used until 1917.

Island clam bakes continued until motor cars took over and extended the range to Connecticut and Long Island shores.

Horseback riding, even after the automobile invasion, remained in fashion about town until paved streets and mushrooming houses claimed all paths and fields. Arthur Medlar operated a riding stable down behind the school, and moved it later to Pondfield Road West, where the Hospital Clinic now stands. Trotting races were held at one time near Siwanoy.

Tennis was a well-established sport for both ladies and men by the turn of the century. Courts once lined Valley Road. The opening of the Bronxville Field Club in 1925 further spurred this game. Golfers found their liking at Siwanoy.

Men's amateur baseball teams drew big crowds in the early 1900's. Playing on fields where the First Westchester National Bank and Towers Apartments now stand, the dashing players of Swain's Athletic and Social Club and the Bronxville Athletic Association battled bravely with visiting teams. Later,

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after the second World War, twilight softball games were played on Chambers Field by young villagers back from overseas.

Generally, the village's interest in team sports changed from active adult participation to a spectator role as the Bronxville School began to field well-coached football, soccer, basketball, baseball and track teams in the 1930's.

During its lifetime, the old Village Hall was the center of many leisure activities including swimming and bowling. Quite regularly, dances and gala balls were held there on Saturday nights, sponsored by the American Legion, the Firemen, and other civic groups.



Skate house on Bronxville Lake circa 1918. Alger Court is on the hill in background.

PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE

Along with active diversions, a wealth of cultural, educational, social and civic organizations grew in our town. The idea of pitching in together for worthwhile causes is typically American and probably dates back to our ancestors joining together in house and barn building, husking bees, and preparing baskets for sick and needy neighbors. The large number of worthy civic organizations in Bronxville precludes naming them all, with their own histories, but our town is civically conscious and provides time and funds for many charitable activities and Scouting for the young.

Culturally, Bronxville citizens also are active locally, even though New York, with all of its offerings, is only a step away. Literary and historical groups like the "Nondescript Club", dating back to 1896, "The Villager" — a literary magazine started in 1928, theater groups, an art society, and frequent exhibitions and recitals are part of the fabric of village life. Supporting the cultural activities are facilities such as our school, the excellent village library, and the Bronxville Women's Club.

One special annual activity has become a beloved tradition in our community — the Christmas Pageant.

THE PAGEANT

On Christmas Eve each year, our village unites all Christian faiths in the presentation of the Christmas story. Clergymen of Bronxville's churches and citizens dressed in authentic Biblical costumes portray the coming of Christ to the world, while thousands of villagers and visitors from all over the world watch and join in the familiar carols.

The first pageant was held in front of Lawrence Hospital in 1913. The next year it was staged in Christ Church. In 1915, the pageant chose the rugged side of Sunset Hill, below the Gramatan overlooking Pondfield Road. Buildings mask the hill today, but the Nativity was dramatic and inspiring, set among rocks and trees on the steep slope. After more than two decades the location was changed to the hill in front of the Reformed Church, where it is staged at present.

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The Christmas Pageant, when it was held on Sunset Hill beneath the Gramatan Hotel.

The simple but spiritual depiction of the Nativity has gained world notice, not only for its beauty but also for its symbol of religious unity. For many villagers, Christmas would not be as meaningful without the pageant to renew and refresh the memory of the Holy day.

IN OUR TIME

The noble time machine has finally fallen victim to some electronic illness, and blown its fuse. Nevertheless, we are about as up to date as we need be for our purpose. We have seen our village grow from an Indian area and settler's

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farm to a bustling community of some 6,718 residents.

Bronxville is unique in many ways. Once possessing several light industries, it has become largely a residential community — a village of homes, schools, churches, and small businesses. It is a very wealthy village by national standards, and most of its residents are of similar background and economic standing, much as William Van Duzer Lawrence planned. Property is very valuable in our mile square, because of demand to live here. Taxes are high, too. Without industries to support taxes, the burden falls on private landowners to pay for excellent schools and efficient public services.

Typical of the American pattern of life in our time, Bronxville has lost much of its "permanent population". In earlier days families came, remained, and raised children who also resided in the village, as did succeeding generations. Today, a large part of Bronxville's population is transient. Business changes and opportunities may cause a family to move many times in a lifetime. And young people fan out from college — boys following careers throughout the nation, and girls marrying lads from other areas. This mobility has broken down the old, small-town life of America, but it results in a constant revitalizing force in communities, as new ideas and points of view merge with the old.

Old landmarks fall each year to be replaced by new homes, businesses, and apartments, but this also is the pattern of America's growth — sad though it is in many ways. Quite properly, we don't dwell on past glories and neglect the future. Neither should we forget the courage and self-reliance of those early settlers who carved our village and country from wilderness.

Our community gives us a rich heritage. Bronxville has been shaped by men and women of strength who were unafraid to fight for what they believed, whether the struggle was against Indians, Redcoats, an unruly mob, or fellow citizens with unsound views.

Today, Bronxville has many residents who are renowned leaders in business, education, the professions, science and the arts. They are adding their share to our community's vitality.



Tomorrow, you will be the leaders, whether here or in other parts of the nation. Carry the heritage with you, so that in another hundred years historians may point back with pride to your accomplishments, and your village and nation may draw strength from your example.

APPENDIX A:
 GROWING WITH AMERICA
 A Parallel Chart of Historical Events
 in America and the Bronxville Area

NATIONAL and WORLD EVENTS

LOCAL EVENTS

Columbus discovers North America	1492	
Jamestown Colony founded	1607	Mahican Indians hunting, trapping and camping in Bronxville
Henry Hudson explores Hudson River	1609	
Plymouth Colony founded by Pilgrims	1620	
Dutch found New Amsterdam	1623	
	1639	Jonas Bronck settles north of Harlem River
	1643	"Year of Blood". Anne Hutchinson massacred by Sachem Ann Hoeck
	1646	Van der Donck settles in presentday Yonkers
	1654	Thomas Pell purchases West Chester from the Sachem Ann Hoeck
English capture New Netherlands	1664	
	1666	Royal patent makes Pell's purchase official
	1671	Manors set up in Westchester
Marquette and Joliet explore Mississippi	1673	
La Salle reaches mouth of Mississippi	1682	
	1683	Westchester officially becomes a county
	1687	Huguenots settle New Rochelle
Settlers massacred at Deerfield, Massachusetts	1704	
	1733	Trial of John Peter Zenger
	1750	First settlers living in Bronxville
French and Indian War begins	1754	
Boston Tea Party	1773	
Declaration of Independence	1776	British land in Eastchester
War of Independence begins		
Washington retreats to White Plains		
Washington at Valley Forge	1777	Skirmish at Ward's Tavern
BONHOMME RICHARD defeats SERAPIS	1779	Whig and Tory raids in Westchester
Cornwallis surrenders	1781	Westchester ravaged by raids

APPENDIX A:

NATIONAL EVENTS *cont.*

Washington becomes president	1789
War with England	812-14
James Monroe becomes president	1817
Battle of the Alamo	1835
John Tyler becomes president	1836
Successful use of telegraph	1841
Mormons settle in Utah	1844
Gold Rush	1847
Millard Fillmore becomes president	1849
UNCLE TOM'S CABIN written	1850
Perry opens up Japan	1852
Abraham Lincoln becomes president	1853
War between the States begins	1854
Draft riots	1861
Gen. Sherman captures Atlanta	1863
Ulysses S. Grant becomes president	1864
Transcontinental Railroad spans nation	1869
15th Amendment gives negroes right to vote	1870
Economic panic	1873
Chester Arthur becomes president	1873
Benjamin Harrison becomes president	1881
Grover Cleveland becomes president	1883
First Ford car made	1888
Spanish-American War	1889
Theodore Roosevelt becomes president	1893
Wright brothers make first flight	1895
	1897
	1898
	1899
	1901
	1902
	1903
	1904

LOCAL EVENTS *cont.*

Marble quarries open in Tuckahoe
Mastertons move to Bronxville
Bolton family moves to Bronxville
Railroad comes through Bronxville
Swains move to village
Prescotts move to village
Dutch Reformed Church built
Village gets its own post office
Miss Lyman's School opens
Mobs storm through Bronxville
Louise Masterton's organ recital
Marble School moved to Union Corners
"Red Schoolhouse" opens
Bronxville residents suffer economic distress
Bertrand Burtnett's school days
Blizzard: Arrival of Lawrence and Chambers
Bronxville Hose Co. formed
First Gramatan Hotel opens
"Bronxville" becomes incorporated village
First local home gets electricity
Christ Church opens
Present Hotel built

APPENDIX A:

NATIONAL EVENTS *cont.*

Oklahoma becomes 46th state	
William H. Taft becomes president	
Woodrow Wilson becomes president	
U.S. enters World War I	
Mussolini seizes power in Italy	
Lindbergh flies the Atlantic	
National depression begins	
Franklin D. Roosevelt becomes president	
Pearl Harbor attacked	
U.S. enters World War II	
Americans land in Italy	
Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima	
U.N. intervenes in Korea	
Dwight Eisenhower becomes president	
John F. Kennedy becomes president	

LOCAL EVENTS *cont.*

1905	"Yellow School" under construction
1906	First Village Hall built
1907	Dudley Lawrence's appendicitis attack
1909	Lawrence Hospital opens
1910	Concordia College opens
1913	First Christmas pageant
1917	Railroad underpass
1920	Population booms
1922	High school officially accredited by New York State
	Kraft Tanning Factory burns down
	Bronx River Parkway opens
1925	First sections of present school completed
1926	Present Reformed Church completed
1927	St. Joseph's Church completed
1928	Sarah Lawrence College opens
1929	First Church of Christ Scientist completed
1933	
1941	Villagers conduct air raid drills, and grow vegetables in home "victory" gardens.
1942	Present Village Hall, Library built
1943	First Lutheran Chapel
1945	
1950	Lutheran Church completed
1953	
1961	New additions to public school

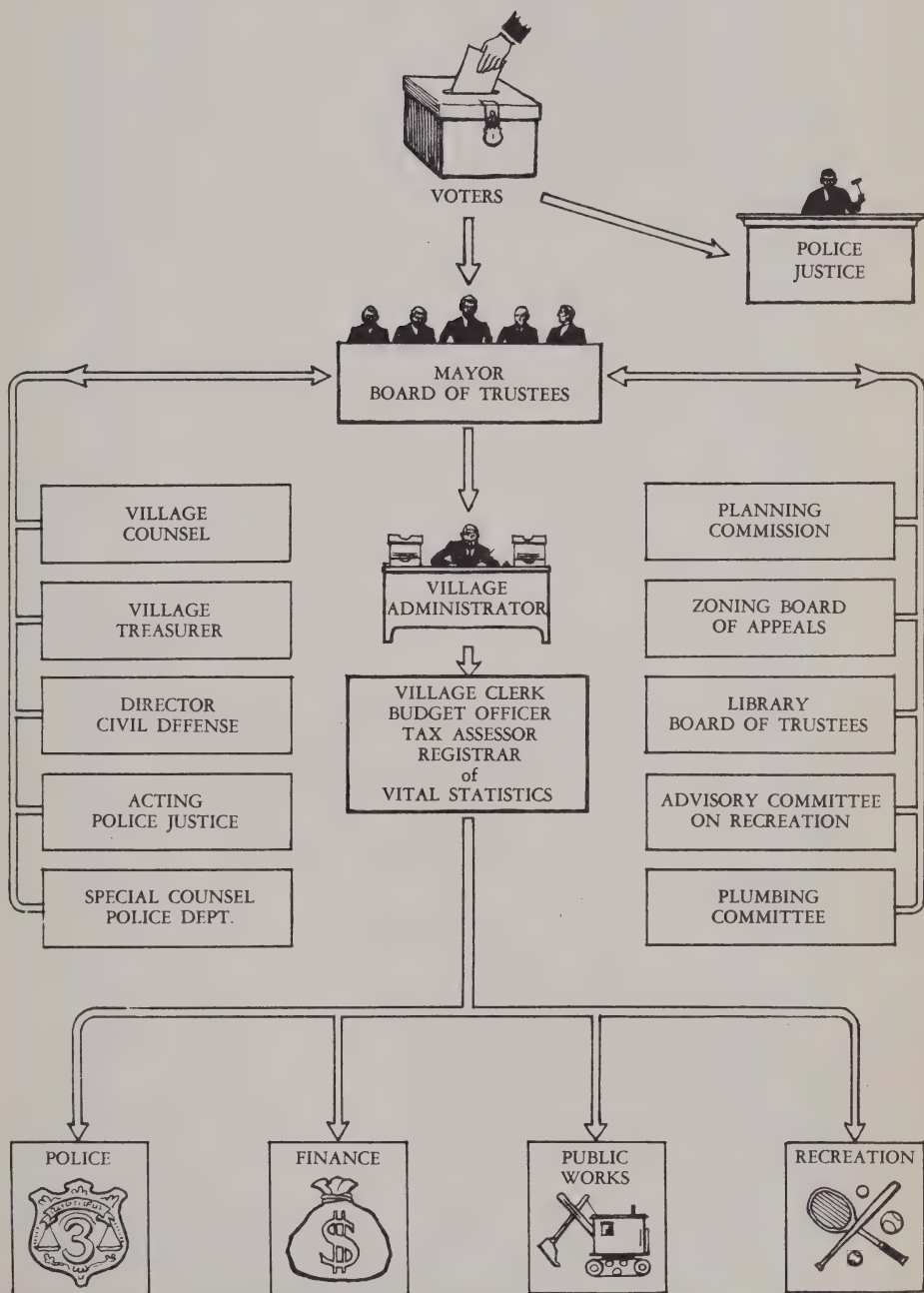
APPENDIX B:
PRESIDENTS AND MAYORS OF BRONXVILLE

<i>PRESIDENT</i>	<i>TERM</i>	<i>REGULAR OCCUPATION</i>
Francis Bacon	1898-1900	Head of F. Bacon Piano Co.
Frank R. Chambers	1900-1902	Head of Rogers Peet & Co.
H. Ward Leonard	1902-1903	Head of Ward Leonard Electric Co.
Frederick Geller	1903-1905	Lawyer, director of banking firms
Ellis W. Gladwin	1905-1908	Insurance executive, director
William P. H. Bacon	1908-1910	President, Bacon Piano Co.
Leonard Kebler	1910-1912	President, Ward Leonard Electric Co.
Alfred E. Smith	1912-1913	Lawyer
Henry W. Smith	1913-1915	Lawyer
Charles Buston, Jr.	1916-1919	Owner-president of Keiser Cravats, Inc.
T. Channing Moore	1916-1919	I.B.M. executive, state assemblyman
Chester O. Swain	1919-1921	Vice-president of Standard Oil Co.
Wagner Van Vlack	1921-1922	Real estate executive
Arthur F. Corwin	1922-1923	Oil company executive
Hugh S. Robertson	1923-1924	Building firm partner
Harry M. Lee	1924-1926	President, Lee & Simmons, Inc.

MAYOR

Robert J. Patterson	1926-1929	Editor and publisher
Philip Torchio	1929-1931	Vice-president of New York Edison Co.
Harry G. Kimball	1931-1939	Lawyer
Frederick L. Devereux	1939-1942	Bell Telephone Co. executive, army colonel
Ralph B. Maltby	1942-1952	Head of paper company, corporation director
James D. Miller	1952-1955	Head of Accounting Firm
Donald B. Swinford	1955-1957	Executive of New York Life Insurance Co.
Peter P. Miller	1957-1959	Executive of National Dairy Products' Inc.
Elbert A. Hugill, Jr.	1959-	Executive of Shell Oil Co.

APPENDIX C: VILLAGE GOVERNMENT



APPENDIX D

CONCERNING THE PREPARATION OF "PATHWAY TO A VILLAGE"

The death of Naoma Wetzel saddened a community which revered her as teacher and loved her as gentle friend. That her influence and memory might be carried forward to future generations of students, a committee of villagers was formed to select a fitting memorial. Members of the committee were parents representing class groups Miss Wetzel had taught over a twenty year period, and also a few teachers who had worked closely with her.

Remembering her keen interest in the heritage of the village, the committee agreed that a written history of Bronxville for the use of students would be a project that Naoma Wetzel might have chosen.

Funds which were contributed by friends, former students and their parents, and interested Bronxville citizens, enabled the committee to commission an author - illustrator to write the book. They selected as author a former Bronxville resident who had attended the twelve grades of the Bronxville School. He submitted to the committee an outline of his ideas for comment and discussion.

Adding to the community aspect of the project, the seventh grade faculty and students, aided by parents, devoted a great deal of time to the study of local history. Each student planned and conducted an interview with one or more long-time residents of the village. Field trips were made to local historic sites. Pupils took photographs and rendered sketches. The late Bertrand Burtnett, village historian, visited the school and talked of his childhood in the 1880's. His exciting memories of olden days were recorded on tape for posterity. Other authorities also addressed school classes.

Written and oral reports culminating the students' research were shared with the author during his visits to the school. The reports were of great assistance to him, not only for their informative leads, but also as indications of which areas most interested and stimulated the children.

APPENDIX D

The author proceeded from this point to conduct his own research and interviews. The village library, the press, public and private papers, and memorabilia yielded quantities of information which were screened, collated and weighed for accuracy, interest, and value. Facts were tested against the living memory of older residents. Letters of inquiry were written to sources outside the community. Photographs and maps were assembled to reconstruct the outward look of past decades and centuries. In short, the regular channels of research were explored, occasionally ending in disappointing shoals, but more often leading to fascinating lore.

In draft stage, the book was read by the committee and other villagers with personal knowledge of local history. Their helpful comments and suggestions were incorporated in the revised text wherever possible.

The initial contributions to the Naoma Wetzel Memorial Fund were supplemented at publication time by an advance of private capital, without interest, made available by several generous village families. Their belief in the value of the project and need for the book made its production possible.

From the original concept of the history down to the typesetting, engravings, and printing, *Pathway to a Village* is a Bronxville effort, intended to stimulate the interest of students and increase the pride of both young and old in the heritage of their community.

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